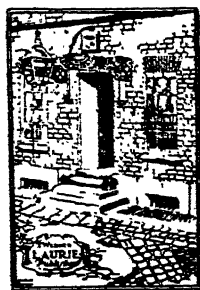
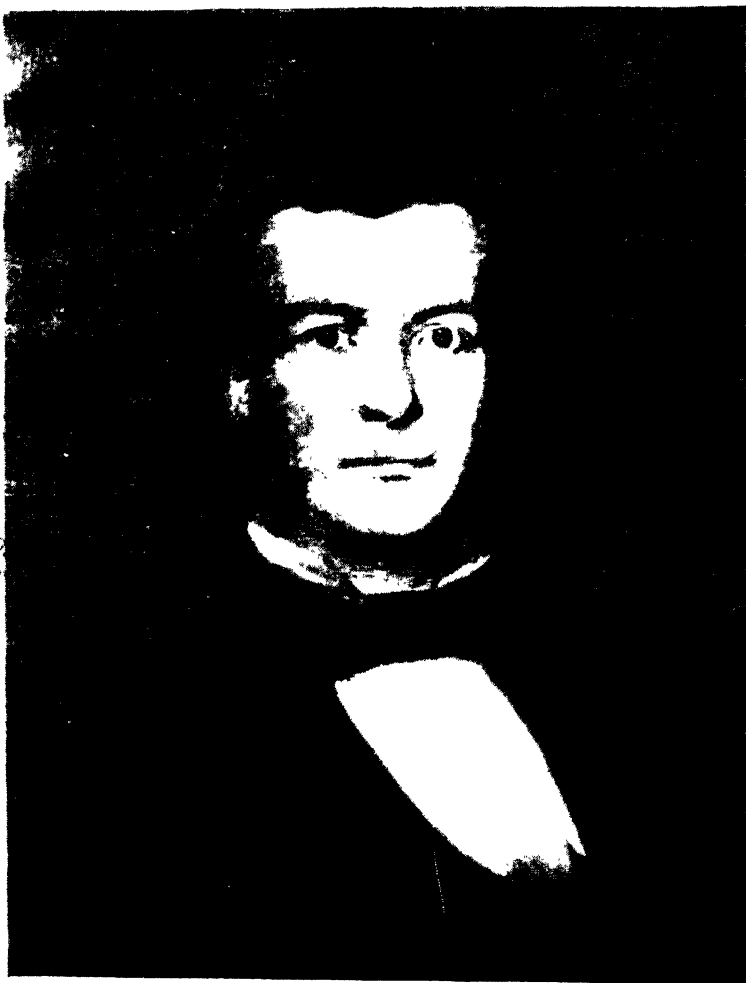


# MARK TWAIN





Sam Clemens, age 21, by unknown artist  
(Hitherto unpublished)

# MARK TWAIN

By

**CYRIL CLEMENS**

*(His Cousin)*

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
**BOOTH TARKINGTON**

~~ILLUSTRATED~~



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Dear Cyril Clemens:

Mark's dedication to John Smith cannot be improved upon. I am against dedications: they remind me of,

"Toil, envy, want: the patron and the gaol," when authors were beggars.

He belongs to the whole English speaking world. Dedicate to it, not to me.

Yours faithfully,

G. Bernard Shaw.

Mark Twain's Dedication:

To

John Smith

whom I have known in divers and sundry places about the world, and whose many and manifold virtues did always command my esteem, I

DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

It is said that the man to whom a volume is dedicated, always buys a copy. If this prove true in the present instance, a princely affluence is about to burst upon

THE AUTHOR.

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## INTRODUCTION

By Booth Tarkington

USUALLY the works of art we preserve, after the passing of the generation that has produced them, owe their survival either to our appreciation of their artistic significance or to our belief in their historic value as sources of light upon the manners and morals of their own time. *Huckleberry Finn* is one of those works that we preserve for both of these reasons, and for other reasons, too, our laughter being one of them. But upon its first appearance this was a book immediately recognizable as bearing the "birthmark of immortality"; good readers perceived at once that it was an American "Classic." Time has not shaken it, nor will shake it.

An exalted realist, criticizing *Treasure Island*, said that pirates were rare; he had never met anybody who had even seen one. I think I recall that Stevenson's reply was to the effect that he himself had been one in his boyhood and that all the boys he had ever known were pirates frequently. *Tom Sawyer* supports the great Scotchman's defense; but Mark Twain was so generous to the boys in *Tom Sawyer* that he let them do more than merely play at being pirates. He gave them adventures that all boys, in their longing dreams, make believe they have. He made extravagant, dramatic things happen to them; they were pitted against murderers, won their ladyloves, and discovered hidden gold. He made them so real that their very reality is the stimulus of the adult reader's laughter; but he embedded this reality in the romance of a plot as true to the conventional rules of

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mid-nineteenth century romantic novelwriting as it was to the day-dreams of the boy Mark Twain himself had been.

Mark Twain, writing *Tom Sawyer*, transposed himself backward through time into the boy he was in Hannibal, felt and knew again all that the boy had felt, said again what the boy had said, and then, with a masterly craft, evoked the portrait of that boy on paper. Moreover, this portrait is none the less true for the unreal background of plot against which it is seen, and I think the reason for this truthfulness is that the fantasie of romantic events seemed real to Mark Twain as he wrote, and that he had no doubt of its reality since it was built out of stuff fashioned in the mind of the boy. That is to say, although Mark Twain spoke of Tom Sawyer as a composite, the portrait is mainly of Mark Twain as a boy: it is essentially autobiographical, though by no means literally the record of Mark Twain's own youthful adventures and circumstances.

But into the story there is early the advent of a personage who was warmly sympathetic to Mark Twain yet exterior to him in no sense autobiographical. This first appearance of one who has been for more than half a century an inmate, so to speak, of every American household where there is any reading was accomplished with astonishing simplicity. There should have been meteors and portents; but Huckleberry Finn strolled into the consciousness of his fellow-countrymen modestly and wholly unaware of his own greatness. In spite of that, what ushered him in is a noble bit of writing.

"Shortly Tom came upon the juvenile pariah of the village, Huckleberry Finn, son of the town drunkard. Huckleberry was cordially hated and dreaded by all the mothers of the town, because he was idle and lawless and vulgar and bad—and because all their children admired him so, and delighted in his forbidden society, and wished they

dared to be like him. Tom was like the rest of the respectable boys, in that he envied Huckleberry, his gaudy outcast condition, and was under strict order not to play with him. So he played with him every time he got a chance. Huckleberry was always dressed in the cast-off clothes of full-grown men, and they were in perennial bloom and fluttering with rags. His hat was a vast ruin with a wide crescent lopped out of its brim; his coat, when he wore one, hung nearly to his heels and had the rearward buttons far down the back; but one suspender supported his trousers; the seat of the trousers bagged low and contained nothing; the fringed legs dragged in the dirt when not rolled up.

"Huckleberry came and went, at his own sweet will. He slept on doorsteps in fine weather and in empty hogsheads in the wet; he did not have to go to school or to church, or call any being master or obey anybody; he could go fishing or swimming when and where he chose, and stay as long as it suited him; nobody forbade him to fight; he could sit up as late as he pleased; he was always the first boy that went barefoot in the spring and the last to resume leather in the fall; he never had to wash, nor put on clean clothes; he could swear wonderfully. In a word, everything that goes to make life precious that boy had. So thought every harassed, hampered, respectable boy in St. Petersburg."

I do not believe that when Mark Twain wrote this passage he suspected that it was the preliminary sketch out of which would be evolved a masterpiece; I think he had the pleasure of finding in Huckleberry one of those people who walk into a story and entertain the author and beglamor him and seduce him into writing more and more about them. In *Tom Sawyer* he kept Huckleberry within bounds and subordinate to Tom; yet it is obvious that the author was more and more deeply fascinated by Huckleberry, and that the fascination increased and increased until it became irresistible

and so made itself into an irresistible book, greater than its progenitor.

I think it was Stevenson who selected as the two great dramatic moments in all English fiction the dropping of the burden of Christian in *Pilgrim's Progress* and the discovery of Friday's footprint by Robinson Crusoe, and that this selection was supported by the opinion that mental images of these two moments were more universally implanted in the memories of readers than were any others. Stevenson may have been right about this and yet it is probable that in the memories of American readers, at least, three other imaginary pictures would compete in universality: Eliza crossing the ice, Ben Hur winning the race, and Tom Sawyer whitewashing the fence. But by the same test—that of being present interestingly in the minds of readers of all kinds—it seems to me that Huckleberry Finn is the great national figure of his period and that no other "character" of all fiction of that time lives now so vividly, or with anything like such triumph of humor and warm reality, as he does now in this later and greatly changed generation.

Arnold Bennett said that he would give all of Thackeray and all of George Eliot for the one book by Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*. This was a little hard on the two great Victorians, and particularly hard on Thackeray, but nevertheless should be welcome as a tribute from one of those British cousins of ours who are not often expansively appreciative except of nearer relatives. Kipling yearned to possess Mark Twain's pipe as a memento, and who wouldn't? In Vienna, on the street, people turned their heads and said, "Look! It is the Herr Mark Twain!" Anywhere in the world a truck driver might call to him, "Hello, Mark Twain!" Victor Hugo said to Boyesen one day at a cafe, when Boyesen had felicitated the great man upon his recovery from an illness, "Ah, it is time that I should cease to fill the world!"

Yet it is doubtful that a truck driver in Australia or the United States, or even London, would have called out to a pedestrian upon the sidewalk, "Hello, Victor Hugo."

No one in any sidewalk crowd will ever again see that unmistakable figure, that white-maned head, that handsome, almost startlingly American face, those deep-set bluest eyes, and pluck at a companion's sleeve and say, "Look! It's Mark Twain!" But still, as we go deeper into the twentieth century, and move toward the twenty-first and beyond, what multitudes shall see a sunshiny village dusty street of long ago and the brown flood of the greatest of all rivers and the figure of a ragged boy, familiar spirit of the village and of the river, and shall cry to him, "Hello, Huckleberry Finn! Hail, and live forever!"

Kennebunkport, Me.

Nov. 10, 1938.

Booth Tarkington.



## CHAPTER ONE

### EARLY YEARS

MARK TWAIN, of course, was born Samuel Langhorne Clemens, November 30th, 1835, in a village in north-eastern Missouri, named Florida. That was the year of the appearance of Halley's comet. During his lifetime he often jokingly predicted that since he came in with Halley's comet he would go out with it, and sure enough its next appearance was in the spring of 1910, and Mark died on April the twenty-first of that year.

The baby was named "Samuel" after his grandfather and "Langhorne" after a close friend of his father. Clemens' little son who was born in 1871 was not named "Langhorne" after his father—as many mistakenly suppose—but "Langdon" after the family name of Clemens' wife.

John Marshall Clemens, the baby's father, kept a general store in Florida, and when patronage fell off he invented what may well be called the ancestors of the premium stamp. There was a large barrel on each side of the doorway. When a woman purchaser left she could take a handful of brown sugar from the barrel on the right as her premium. When a man left he could take a swig of whiskey from the barrel on the other side as his premium.

Sam and his brothers and sister learned countless "Uncle Remus" stories from an old slave who used to show the children a large bump on his head, and tell them that had been caused by fright at seeing Moses and the Egyptians drown in the Dead Sea. He also told them the famous story



of "The Golden Arm" that Clemens later used with such splendid effect in his lectures and recitals.

When Sam was four years old his parents moved to the larger town of Hannibal situated directly on the Mississippi and here the boy grew. He first attended an old-fashioned dame school where the tuition was twenty-five cents a week, payable in advance.

The author of this book had the pleasure of knowing well the original Becky Thatcher whose name in real life was Laura Frazer.\* When she was asked if all the events in *Tom Sawyer* were true, Laura Frazer answered:

"Well, most of them really happened, but occasionally Sam stretched things a little."

And when the author questioned her further about that most exciting incident of the book when Tom and Becky are lost in the cave and see the shadow of Indian Joe, she replied without hesitation:

"That was one of the times Sam stretched things a little; for I was never lost in the cave, in fact I was never in there without a guide and a lantern."

"But how about Sam, was he ever lost in the cave, Mrs. Frazer?"

"Oh, he was probably lost, not once but many times, in the cave," returned the old lady with a smile of rare charm, "that boy was always up to mischief and devilment."

A few years ago the author paid his last call upon Laura Frazer. One evening he approached the old red brick farm house entirely surrounded by a lawn of extraordinary greenness, which was made still more green by the contrast of a long white-washed fence. It was late afternoon and the poultry were drawing closer to the house: the squawking of

---

\* Her maiden name was Laura Hawkins.

the guinea hens and the chirping of the peacocks emphasized the country scene.

Inside, in a cool, high-ceilinged room with quaint mahogany furniture, Mrs. Frazer was waiting in her rocking chair: a beautiful old lady with snow-white hair, fine features, such clear, penetrating eyes and a smile of exceeding graciousness. Dressed in an old-fashioned way with white shirt-waist and a simple black skirt, she was the personification of her generation grown old. After shaking hands with rare charm and graciousness, she asked me to be seated in another rocking-chair. Describing how she had enjoyed her visit with her niece to Mark Twain's home at Redding, Connecticut, she had not found Sam much changed after a lapse of over half a century:

"He had the same slow way of drawling out his words as he had when a boy, and like of old he saw the joke in everything quicker than a hound-dog does a rabbit." Thinking of this made her face break into a charming, reminiscent smile.

"Often he would ask me if I remembered so-and-so," continued Mrs. Frazer, "and when I would say 'yes, but he is dead now,' Sam would lay his hand in mine as if to sympathize with one who, like him, had lost so many."

After a minute or two of silence, she went on:

"As I sat there on the porch listening to him, I felt that he was, indeed, a great man who had love for all his fellow men. He had the same playfulness about him when he was over seventy as he had when he was in his early teens. And I wept as though I had lost my only son when he died a little more than a year after I saw him. I love to have my daughter read *Tom Sawyer* to me. I hear and see Sam on every single page."

And Mrs. Frazer went on to tell the author how every Friday afternoon there would be a spelling-bee at school. The boys lined up on one side of the room and the girls on the other. Sam was always the best on the boys' side, and she the best on the girls' side, and then it would be between the two of them. Sam was always most chivalrous, but he was now in a dilemma. What was he to do? Mrs. Frazer remembered that he always got out of the difficulty by making only a slight mistake—such as leaving one of the r's out of February—so that he would not ruin his reputation as a speller, but yet, at the same time, his little sweetheart could win the prize.

Sam's father would often follow his son to school to see that he really attended and did not attempt to play hooky—as the youngster did only too often. The father had no difficulty in keeping his son in sight until they came to a vast oak that stood in the middle of the roadway—wagons and pedestrians being obliged to go to one side or the other. Sam would go around one side of the huge tree, and then and there his father knew that he would never see his son again that morning. For the tree was so huge, Sam was so nimble-footed, and the shadows showed up so easily on the dusty road, that the boy with all the tricks and resources of a squirrel, would commence playing a game of high-spy with his parent, and no matter how quick the father was in running around the tree, he could never see his son, much less lay hands on him, again.

In *Tom Sawyer* the boys look for buried treasure and find it at the end of the story; there was really buried treasure on an island in the river opposite Hannibal supposedly hidden by two French explorers. But in real life it has never been discovered. It still lies buried in some tree or beneath one to make the fortune of its discoverer.

Huck Finn's real name was Tom Blankenship, and he grew up to move to the new state of Minnesota, and there become a very highly respected judge; there was a real Indian Joe in Hannibal, but he was a gentle old soul who did not die of starvation in the cave as the story has it, but lost his life in a burning house.

Sam inherited all his humor and fun, not from his father who was of a somewhat gloomy disposition, but from his mother whom the famous son resembled in many ways. Once a neighbor asked her if she was afraid that Sam would get killed or drowned since he was always up to some trick or other. She replied in the slow picturesque drawl that her son inherited from her:

. "He is such a perpetual nuisance that I am only afraid that he will *not* be drowned or killed."

The story is told that she once had to drown some superfluous kittens. She didn't pass the buck as many another woman would have done. She did the deed herself but characteristically in as humane a way as possible: she drowned the little creatures in warm milk!

Sam and his mother delighted in 'joshing' each other. Once when Sam's drawling speech was more noticeable than usual, Mrs. Clemens said to her son:

"Sam why do you pull your words so?"

"Why, ma'am," Sam replied very, very slowly, "I pull my words because I guess you pull yourn!"

Clemens also inherited his absent-mindedness from his mother, but his older brother Orion was even more absent-minded. Orion had married and moved to Keokuk. One day his wife said, as she went out for the day, that he would find

his lunch in the ice-box. That evening she asked Orion if he had eaten his meal and he replied in the affirmative, but with a somewhat wry expression. When she went to the box, she discovered that the lunch was still there, but dough that was setting for the morrow's bread had vanished. Orion had absent-mindedly eaten the first thing that came to his hand!

Mrs. Orion always had to inspect her husband before he went abroad to see that he was not still wearing his house slippers or had not forgotten his collar and tie.

Of course the big ambition of all the boys in Hannibal was to get on a river boat—they did not all expect that they could obtain such an exalted position as a pilot or captain, but they did all hope to become a mate, a purser, or a leadsman, or, at the very least, a deck-boy, before their earthly careers ended.

The chief excitement of all the citizens of Hannibal was the arrival, and departure, of the river boats. An old darkey would be stationed on a promontory to watch for smoke that indicated a steamboat's approach, and as soon as he shouted out, "Steamboat a comin', steamboat a comin'," the whole town would wake up as if by magic. Even the pigs which had been sleeping in the heavy dust of the town's main street, and the town drunkard, would arouse themselves and be on hand to meet the boat.

When Sam was about six years old, the wish to go down the river on a floating palace became so strong with him, that one day he smuggled himself aboard a boat for Saint Louis, and hid himself on the top deck. All would have been well, except that as the boat progressed southward a terrific storm, with lightning and hail, arose and the boy sought shelter—of all places!—in the captain's cabin. At the next stop, the small town of Louisiana about twenty miles south of Hannibal, the runaway was put off the boat in ignominy and sent

home. For a week thereafter Sam preferred eating his meals off the mantelpiece!

At the Sunday school there was one boy who was more mischievous and harder to handle than Sam himself—if such a person could exist—and after a great deal of patience on the teacher's part, he was expelled. A little later the rumor arose that one night the Devil had come and carried him off, for he was nowhere to be seen about Hannibal—a rumor that the Sunday school teacher, far from denying, rather encouraged. But then one day a steamboat arrived at the Hannibal wharf, and the boy whom all the town believed the Devil had got, stepped from the boat in unimaginable glory. He was actually a cabin boy with a blue uniform and gilded buttons! Upon the instant all Sam's faith in the Sunday school died a speedy death.

Sam and his brothers and sister would spend all their vacations out at Uncle John Quarles' farm in Florida, Missouri. The children had ideal days, playing in all the glory of the Missouri countryside. The woods were full of squirrels and rabbits, the meadows were gay with clover and butterflies; there were blackberries in the fence rows, apples and peaches and watermelons. These latter were not always ripe and once when little Sam had eaten several bites of a particularly green one, he was seized with cramps so severe that his life was despaired of. All were uneasy with the exception of his mother who simply remarked:

"Sammy will pull through; he wasn't born to die that way."

Even at this early day the future author of *Huckleberry Finn* was beginning to tell tall tales, and one day a neighbor leaned over the fence, and asked Mrs. Clemens if she ever

believed anything that that son of hers said. To which she promptly replied:

"Oh, yes, I know his average. I discount him ninety per cent. The rest is pure gold."

The name of the teacher who received twenty-five cents a week for tuition was Miss Horr. She always opened the school day with prayer, followed by the reading of a chapter of the Bible, with explanations and the rules of conduct. Finally the A B C class was called, because their recital was a hand-to-hand struggle requiring no preparation.

The very first day at school Sam misbehaved and he was sent out to get a stick. Every one that he saw lying around the schoolyard looked much too formidable, but he finally discovered some shavings lying beside a tree that had recently been cut down. He picked up a shaving and marched in with it to Miss Horr. Although she might have seen the humor, Miss Horr felt that discipline must be maintained, so she turned to another boy and said,

"Jimmy Dunlap, go and bring a switch for Sammy."

Sam had as playmates many of the little slave children of Hannibal. There was one small chore boy who was very happy despite the fact that his mother had recently been sold down South into slavery. In spite of his loss he went about his daily way singing, whistling, and whooping until his noise bothered even Sam who complained to Mrs. Clemens.

"Ma, make Sandy stop singing all the time. He makes my ears ache."

But Mrs. Clemens knew better.

"Poor thing! His mother's been sold away from home. When he sings it shows maybe he is not remembering. When he is still, I am afraid he's grieving, and I can't stand that."

A few years before his death John Marshall Clemens was elected judge, and he soon obtained the sobriquet of "The Walking Judge." The name arose in this way. Two men who had been fighting were brought before Judge Clemens, and, after he thought he had settled the difficulty, he let the men go. But as soon as they got outside they began hitting each other again. As it happened Judge Clemens also came out on his way home to lunch. Instead of wasting any further words on the men he simply gave each a sound rap on their heads with his gavel, settled the quarrel, and gave himself a nickname!

Much of Sam's boyhood is described in his posthumous *Autobiography* which appeared in 1924. Apropos of this, Bernard Shaw once told the author of this book:

"There was only one immortal passage in the whole book. That was the one which describes Clemens living as a boy in a region where all sorts of frightful catastrophies—hurricanes, earthquakes, steamers wrecked or blown up on the river, babies eaten by alligators or bitten by rattlesnakes, and murders galore—was taught that all these calamities were sent by the Almighty as a warning to him to repent and be a good boy. He would wake up in the middle of the night when thunder roared and lightning flashed, overwhelmed with a sense of his personal responsibility for the death of so many innocent persons, and would behave himself quite well for nearly two days afterwards."

The boys of Hannibal would swim in Bear Creek, where, after many attempts, Sam had finally mastered the art of swimming. It was only the Clemens perseverance and persistence that kept him at it until he knew how, because while he was learning two of his playmates had drowned, and often he himself had been dragged out of the water more dead than alive—once by his playmates and another time by an old slave named Neal Champ. But when he



acquired the ability, he soon swam better than any boy in the whole county.

In appearance Sam was not a particularly attractive child. Not tall for his years, his head was somewhat too large for his body. He had a great mass of light sandy hair, keen blue-gray eyes, features rather large, and a fair delicate complexion. His gentle, winning manner and a charming, frank smile made him a favorite with all his schoolmates.

Those were rough-and-tumble days, and children learned the use of tobacco and "swear" words very soon—too soon, it is to be feared. Before Sam was ten he had been stung into chewing tobacco by a big girl at school who went up to him and said:

"Do you chaw terbacker?"

"No," the boy confessed.

"Haw!" she cried to the other scholars, "here's a boy that can't chaw terbacker!"

Although Sam's younger brother Henry became the Sid of *Tom Sawyer*, Henry in real life was a much finer character than he is made out to be in the book, and Sam always defended him from any town bullies who might have endeavored to molest him.

We know for certain that several of the famous incidents described in *Tom Sawyer* actually happened. Sam did throw earth at Henry for getting him into trouble about the colored thread with which he sewed his shirt when he came home from swimming; he did inveigle the boys into white-washing the fence; and he did give pain-killer to old Tom, the cat. There seems to have been a cholera scare, and pain-

killer was considered a preventive in the pharmacopoeia of the day.

As we have seen, Huck Finn really lived in Hannibal and his name was Tom Blankenship. His father was Ben Blankenship who held the post of town drunkard. Tom also had several brothers. The family picked up a precarious livelihood through fishing and hunting, and lived at first in a dilapidated old cabin built of logs and bark, but later moved into quite a pretentious building near the Clemens house on Hill Street.

Old drunken Ben Blankenship would have thought anyone crazy if they had told him that pieces of his house would one day be carried off as relics due to the later genius of one of his son Tom's playmates.

Once Sam and his companions succeeded in killing a 'coon, and they skinned the animal. Sam was delegated to sell the skin to the local dealer. He succeeded and received a lowly ten cents. But he noticed that after purchasing it the man threw it into a back room, the window of which was open. So, after things had quieted down a little, Sam crept around, got in the window, and retrieved the 'coonskin. He then took it around to the front, and resold it. This he kept up the entire afternoon. Towards evening, the storekeeper thought to himself that certainly he had an enormous supply of 'coonskins, and he looked in the room, and saw instead of a huge pile, only the one that he had just bought. In after years the storekeeper, whose name was Selms, used to tell this story on himself as a huge joke.

The boys were always up to some trick or other, and some were dangerous doings which they never should have attempted. They were in the habit of going up a large hill

near Hannibal that was covered with huge rocks and boulders. Beneath the foot of the hill wound a wagon road. The boys' trick was to loose rocks and boulders, and then release them so that they would go racing across the road just in front of some wagon or buggy. The people of the vicinity would talk about the narrow escapes that they had had from boulders as they went along this road, but no one ever imagined that a human agency was responsible. One day the boys were loosening a huge boulder, and all of a sudden before they were ready, it started moving. They were horrified to discover that it was headed straight for an old darkey jogging along in his buggy, all unconscious of his impending doom. But as luck would have it, just a few yards before it reached the darkey it struck another boulder imbedded in the hillside, which caused it to make a tremendous leap in the air, and sail over the terrified negro, his buggy, and his mule. This caused the boys to feel that sending boulders down the hillside *might* have an element of risk in it, so thereafter they sought other amusements.

After completion of the dame school Sam attended one conducted by a rather elderly, dour man named Cross. One day Sam wrote a couplet,

"Cross by name and cross by nature—

Cross jumped over an Irish potato."

A crony of Sam's urged him to write it on the blackboard, but with the modesty of a true poet, he declined, and when John was insistent, he cut short the argument by saying,

"I *dare* you to do it, John!"

John always took a dare, so when the teacher went home for lunch, he chalked it on the blackboard in large bold letters. Upon the opening of afternoon class John received stimulating attention, and poor Sam was uneasy that the teacher would endeavor to ferret out the author—but fortunately the matter ended with John.

Sam's father died in March, 1847, and Sam suffered an agony of remorse because he felt that he had been disobedient and careless so many times when he could have helped his father. So dejected and unhappy did Sam become during the days after his father's funeral that his mother feared for his sanity. She asked that he not worry any more about his past, but try and become a success and make something of his life in the future.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE YOUNG PRINTER

IN ADDITION to Clemens, other great American writers who started life as printing apprentices were Walt Whitman, William Dean Howells, Artemus Ward, Bret Harte, and Joel Chandler Harris. Most of them had no education beyond the grammar school.

When Sam Clemens apprenticed himself to Ament, the Hannibal printer and editor, he was to receive no salary save board, lodging, and clothes. The clothes took the shape of his employer's hand-me-downs, and in recalling these days Clemens used to say, "The trousers were so long that I had to turn them up to my chin to make them fit, and my shirt was as large as a circus tent."

Once when Sam was walking down one of the town's streets he saw whirling along the road a scrap of paper. He picked it up and discovered it to be a torn-out page from some biography of Joan of Arc, of whom he had never heard: for this early he knew little or nothing of history or biography. Thus was his interest in the romantic career of Joan of Arc fired, and some thirty years later he wrote his famous biography of the French heroine.

"The meanest man I ever knew," recalled Mark Twain in after years, "lived in Hannibal. He sold his son-in-law the half of a very fine cow, and then refused to share the milk with the young fellow on the ground that he had only sold him the front half. The son-in-law was also compelled

to provide all the cow's fodder and to carry water to her twice a day. Finally the cow butted the old man through a barbed wire fence, and he sued his son-in-law for damages!"

To prove that he was a success from the start Twain liked to tell an incident that occurred while he was a compositor on the Hannibal newspaper. A few hours before the afternoon edition went to press, a man came in to place a classified ad in regard to his lost dog. "Do you think I put that ad in our paper?" asked Twain, "Why man, I went right out, found that dog before the afternoon edition was on the street and claimed the reward."

In the course of a dinner he attended in the closing years of his life, Twain talked of his pet aversion. "Christian Science," he said, "reminds me of the apple cure for drunkenness. In Hannibal, in my boyhood, the apple cure was highly esteemed. I remember once hearing the Hannibal town drunkard expatiate on the apple cure. 'You believe in it then, do you, Hank', a listener asked. 'Believe in it? How can I help believing in it?' The drunkard said, excitedly. 'Ain't it cured me twenty times?'"

When the first negro minstrel show visited Hannibal, Sam became very interested in dramatics, and laid claims to being a somnambulist in subsequent amateur dramatics. His claim that it was real somnambulism led to certain inconveniences: for people thought they had the right to stick pins into him to see if he could really feel it or not!

Sam has confessed that for a while, in Hannibal, he entertained the idea of becoming a minister—but only for a while. Recalling that it was the most earnest ambition that he had ever had, he remarked:

"Not that I ever really wanted to be a preacher, but because it never occurred to me that a preacher could be damned. It looked like a safe job."

The winters seemed to be longer and colder in those days than in more recent years. Yet, an all around sport, Sam enjoyed skating as much as he did swimming. One winter's night Sam and another boy skated until after midnight. When they were in the middle of the lake they heard an ominous grinding noise, and a short time later the ice broke. To reach shore again they had to jump from cake to cake. Sam's companion fell in a few feet from shore. The dip in the dreadfully cold water cost him his hearing.

After leaving Ament's paper, Clemens worked on other Hannibal journals, including one that was conducted by his elder brother Orion who had been named after the constellation "Orion." Once his brother had to leave town, and Sam was put in charge of the paper. Poor Sam had difficulty in getting up the editorials. The first few days he copied some articles out of an old encyclopedia, but towards the end of the week, he couldn't even think of anything to copy. So he hit upon the idea of cartooning the principal citizen of the town who, having been crossed in love, was supposed to be seriously contemplating suicide. He drew a crude woodcut (still extant and to be seen in old papers) of the man wading into the Mississippi and holding a thermometer in his hand. Underneath the picture the man is saying to himself:

"The water is a bit chilly today for suicide. I guess I'll have to wait."

That Monday morning the prominent citizen came around to fight a duel with the man responsible, and when he

saw such an insignificant young chap he invited him to lunch instead.

Orion had agreed to pay Sam three dollars a week, but as the paper continued rapidly to go down hill, he was unable to pay his brother even this. Once again Sam had to be content with merely board and clothes—"poor, shabby clothes," he remarked in later years. In order to help along the family finances, Mrs. Clemens took a few boarders, and his sister Pamela gave music lessons.

But Orion was far too absent-minded to run a successful paper, and it rapidly failed. An ad for a sheriff's sale would remain in the paper oft-times for over a year, because Orion decided it was cheaper and easier just to leave the ad in the paper, rather than upset the form to take it out. Many a time a stranger would arrive in town, and would become all excited about the forthcoming sheriff's sale—only to be laughed at by the natives, and told that it had taken place over a year before.

Once when Sam asked Orion to lend him a few dollars to buy a gun, Orion, pressed by circumstances, lost his temper completely, and roundly berated Sam for his extravagance. Whereupon the brothers, usually so devoted, had a violent falling out, and Sam determined to go to St. Louis to earn his livelihood.

While in St. Louis Sam stayed with his sister Pamela (the prototype of Mary Sawyer) who had married William A. Moffett. Sam secured a job in the composing-room of the *Evening News*. As soon as he had saved enough money, the youth of eighteen decided to go East.



## CHAPTER THREE

### FIRST VISIT TO NEW YORK

AS a journeyman printer, Sam started out to see the world, and finally reached New York. Here he got a job at \$4 a week with a downtown printing firm, and lived at a mechanics' boarding house on Duane Street. Never a provident person, he could save only fifty cents above his weekly expenses; the rest was spent in seeing the town. He had arrived there with ten dollars sewed in his coat which his mother had given him for "emergencies."

New York seemed to him "as big as all outdoors". It was something to write home about and in his letters to his sister he did it justice. Here was a city which by then had covered nearly half the Island of Manhattan, and the common belief was that it wouldn't be many years before the whole island would be occupied.

Sam was very surprised to learn that the people did not have to pump water, for it came to them in pipes; and under the streets, he learned, were sewers in which men could walk.

What thrilled the young Missourian more than anything else were the omnibuses, bright yellow and decorated with oil paintings, and drawn by well groomed mules and horses. His impression of these omnibuses is recorded in a chapter of *Roughing It*, which tells how two Western miners who had "struck it rich," chartered one of those Broadway chariots and treated New Yorkers to fareless rides.

While in New York Clemens spent all his evenings in the Mechanic's library, for it was his first "go" at any library

worthy of the name, and before leaving home he had solemnly promised his mother not to "throw a card or swallow a drop" the whole time he was away.

Sam made many visits to the Crystal Palace which had been built for the World's Fair of 1853. He wrote home to his mother that the visitors to the Palace averaged six thousand daily; "double the population of Hannibal". And he went on to say that the price of admission was fifty cents a person, and that they took in about three thousand dollars daily.

The Empire State Building of the day was the Latting Observatory, height about two hundred and eighty feet, from which "you can obtain a grand view of the city and the country around." The Croton Aqueduct, then but recently constructed, also greatly impressed Sam Clemens.

Sam did not take easily to the New York style of cooking, accustomed as he was to the Southern style, and he wrote home complaining the people in New York did not seem to know how to make "hot-bread" or biscuits, but gave him nothing but what was then called "light-bread" which was always served somewhat stale.

Sam had his first taste of the theatre while in Gotham. That year the famous Edwin Forrest was playing at the old Broadway Theatre, and Sam went to see him in "The Gladiator". Sam thought the end of the play very impressive when Forrest, as the "Gladiator", dies at his brother's feet "in all the fierce pleasure of gratified revenge," for the "man's whole soul seems absorbed in the part he is playing."

After New York, Clemens went to Philadelphia where

he worked for about a year on the paper *The Inquirer*. He was a swift compositor, for he could set ten thousand ems a day, and he received pay according to the amount of work he did.

There was an old fellow in the *Inquirer* office named Frog who worked near Clemens. When he went away Sam would hang a line over his case, with a hook on it baited with a piece of red flannel. Sam and his friends never got tired of this joke and it seemed that old Frog was always able to get as mad over it as he had on its first perpetration.

Another old fellow named Pepperjohn owned a home in a distant part of the city and had an abnormal fear of fire. Now and then when everything was quiet except the clicking of the types, Sam would remark with a concerned air:

"Doesn't that fire seem to be in the southeastern part of the city?"

And the old fellow would run to the roof of the newspaper building to make sure that it wasn't in the direction of his home.

Tiring of the East, Sam returned to his old berth on the St. Louis *Evening News*. He shared sleeping quarters with a Frank E. Burrough who aroused his interest in such authors as Bulwer-Lytton, Thackeray, Macaulay, Disraeli, Carlyle. Then after working as a printer in Muscatine, Keokuk, and Cincinnati, he decided to go on the river.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ON THE RIVER

WHEN Clemens met Captain Horace Bixby he told the famous pilot that he wanted "to learn" the river. Not enthusiastic at first, Bixby finally asked Clemens the following questions:

"Young man, do you ever smoke, or drink, or swear?"

Sam gave a negative answer to the first two questions, but he pondered over the one about swearing for a while, and finally said:

"Well, only when it's absolutely necessary!"

Bixby finally promised to teach Sam the river for the sum of five hundred dollars which was payable in installments. It was in April, 1857, that Sam began cubbing on Bixby's boat, the *Paul Jones*.\*

The first day out Bixby called Clemens' attention to different landmarks, "This is Six-Mile Point", "This is Nine-Mile Point", "The slack water ends here, abreast the bunch of China trees; now we cross over." Very interesting, Sam thought, but he paid little attention.

The next morning Bixby called Clemens up to his cabin and asked,

"What's the name of the first point above New Orleans?"

Mark comments, "I was gratified to be able to answer promptly, and I did. I said I didn't know."

Clemens showed so much ignorance that finally Bixby shouted:

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\* Mrs. Pym of St. Louis, Bixby's daughter, in conversations with author.

"By the great Caesar's ghost, I believe you! You're the stupidest dunderhead I ever saw or ever heard of, so help me Moses—Look! What do you think I told you the names of these points for?"

And then Clemens answered, "Well, to—to—be entertaining, I thought."

This was a red flag to a bull, and made Bixby so infuriated that he literally blistered all the paint on the walls of the cabin. Thereafter Clemens remembered what was told him on the river!

There was one mate who was very mean to Cub Clemens. The man seemed to have taken a violent dislike to Sam from the beginning. Poor Sam couldn't answer back, much less strike the man in retaliation, for such would have been mutiny. But when he lay in his bunk before going to sleep he used to kill this man thirty-seven different ways in his imagination, and in this way he got "revenge," besides letting off enough "steam" so he would be able to face the next day without "blowing up."

The Mississippi covers approximately twelve hundred miles between Saint Louis and New Orleans, and Clemens had to know it as well as one knows his own face in the dark. Said Clemens to Bixby:

"Have I got to learn the shape of the river according to all these five hundred thousand different ways? If I tried to carry all that cargo in my head it would make me stoop-shouldered."

"No," answered Bixby emphatically, "you only learn *the* shape of the river; and you learn it with such absolute certainty that you can always steer by the shape that's in your head, and never mind the one that's before your eyes."

Poor Clemens felt that this was like having your sen-

tence changed from being boiled alive to simple hanging, and he was not much encouraged:

"I went to work now to learn the shape of the river; and of all the eluding and ungraspable objects that ever I tried to get mind or hands on, that was the chief. I would fasten my eyes upon a sharp wooded point that projected into the river some miles ahead of me and go to laboriously photographing its shape upon my brain." Then, just as poor Sam began to approach it, the bank would melt away and dissolve into nothingness. It had been merely the shadows of the night!

Clemens described his four years on the river as his postgraduate college course. He felt that he learned infinitely more about human nature while on the river than anyone ever did at college. For the river was the main artery of travel for a territory of colossal size, and inhabitants of every nation in the world were to be found on its surface. "When I find," says Clemens, "a well known character in fiction or biography, I generally take a warm personal interest in him, for the reason that I have known him before—met him on the river."

In after years Bixby recalled that while on the river Sam spent all his spare time either in reading or scribbling in some note book. Thus early was he forming his matchless style.

Clemens spent several years learning the river, for he had to get the river's shape "in all the different ways that could be thought of—upside down, wrong end-first, inside out, fore-and-aft, and 'thort-ships,'—and then know what to do on gray nights when it hadn't any shape at all: "In the course of time I began to get the best of this knotty lesson

and my self-complacency moved to the front once more. Mr. Bixby was all fixed and ready to start it to the rear again.—”

When Bixby had to go to the Missouri river for a while, he consigned his pupil, as was the custom, to another pilot, Ben Jolly, who was on the *John J. Roe*. Sam described the boat, which was only licensed to carry freight, “as slow as an island and as comfortable as a farm,” and it was said of her that going up-stream she usually managed to beat an island, but that going down-stream she hardly ever managed to catch up with the current. The cub-pilot felt that if his uncle Quarles’ farm could be set afloat in the river, it would bear a strong resemblance to the *John J. Roe* in speed and comfort and general roominess.

Although contrary to river law, the Captain usually took ten or a dozen passengers at reduced rates as his guests, and in off-hours Sam would make merry with any attractive girls who might happen to be aboard. He would often play on an old piano, and sing his favorite song about an old horse named Methusalem:

“Took him down and sold him in Jerusalem,  
A long time ago.”

Clemens was always a firm believer in mental telepathy and second sight. One night he had an extraordinarily vivid dream of his younger brother Henry as a corpse lying in a metallic burial case, which was resting on two chairs. On his breast someone had laid a bouquet of white flowers, white except for a single bloom of crimson in the center.

Henry was also engaged on the river in the capacity of a clerk. Just a few weeks later the steamer *Pennsylvania* on which he was serving blew up, and poor Henry was horribly

scalded. He was taken to the hospital in Memphis where he died a few days later, but not before Sam had arrived to be at his side. After Henry had been laid in his coffin Sam entered, and saw him lying exactly as he had seen him in his dream—except for the bouquet of flowers. But that moment an old lady who had taken pity on the youthful and striking face of Henry, entered and laid down a white bouquet with a crimson center!

It took Clemens almost two years to learn the river sufficiently well to obtain his pilot's license in 1859.\* This meant that he then knew every snag and bank and dead tree and reef in all the twelve hundred long miles between St. Louis and New Orleans, every current, every depth and shallow of water, and could navigate not only in daylight, but also during the night.

As a pilot Clemens' salary was from four to five hundred dollars a month—as much as the vice-president of the United States received. And no profession was looked up to with more respect than that of the pilot. It is the fashion of many writers to make fun of Sam's piloting and imply that no one on the river took him seriously. This is altogether erroneous. Says Captain Bixby, than whom we could have no better authority:

"Not only was he a pilot, but a good one."

Yet being a first rate pilot is not at all incompatible with being a humorist, and some of the jokes that Clemens used to tell became known up and down the river. Once he was speaking with some fellow rivermen about presence of mind in accidents. Clemens told how he was once at a fire, and an old man stuck his head out of a fourth story window and yelled for help. Everyone stared at the old fellow but did nothing. But Clemens sent for a rope, "When it came I

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\* The exact date was April 9, 1859:—"To and from St. Louis and New Orleans."



threw the old man the end of it. He caught it and I told him to tie it around his waist. He did so, and I pulled him down."

There was an old retired pilot by the name of Isaiak Sellers who contributed paragraphs of general information and Nestor-like opinions to the New Orleans *Times Picayune*, and signed them "Mark Twain." Today he would be classified as a columnist. Inoffensively egotistical in tone, they were often written in a grandiloquent manner and would begin in some such way as this, "My opinion for the benefit of the citizens of New Orleans," and would recall incidents dating almost as far back as 1800. Not surprisingly, Captain Sellers was considered fair game by the young pilots who imitated his manner of speech and other eccentricities. And Clemens wrote a broadly humorous take-off signed, "Sergeant Fathom", referring to him as "one of the oldest cub pilots on the river." The first letter related an absurd trip that was supposed to have been made in 1763 by the steamer *Jubilee* with a "Chinese captain and a Choctaw crew."

The inimitable take-off delighted Clemens' friends who after passing it around, insisted that it was too good to deny the reading public and had it published in the New Orleans *True Delta* sometime in May, 1859. But it did something that Clemens never meant to do—it broke old Captain Sellers' heart, and he never wrote another paragraph.

One of the reasons why Clemens adopted the name later on was to make retribution to the old fellow. But it was an ill wind—, for by this the old fellow and his penname became immortal, whereas if he had continued writing in peace a few years longer, both would have been buried with him.

One day, between trips, and while engaged in a conversation concerning St. Louis, Sam noticed the large sign of a language teacher which announced that he would teach French, German, and Italian for fifty dollars—or one language for twenty-five dollars. With his customary enthusiasm, Sam determined to learn the trio of languages—he might have need of them, one never could tell. The school consisted of three rooms; a room being devoted to a language.

A student was given a set of cards for each room and he was supposed to walk from one room to another, changing tongues as he changed rooms. For a time Sam attended religiously each time he had a stop-over at St. Louis, but when they began to start the German subjunctive mood—that was too much for him. Yet he kept the cards, and did practice the languages by himself, especially the French of which he seemed to be rather fond.

During his spare moments, in addition to studying languages, Sam read much history. He was enthusiastic over the writings of Lord Macaulay. Being beneath the broad heavens so much he became interested in the stars, and after obtaining a book on astronomy, became engrossed in that most fascinating of all studies.

The large boats had two or three pilots, and the last winter he was on the river Clemens found himself as co-pilot with Captain Bixby on the steamer *Alonzo Child*. To show beyond doubt that Bixby looked upon Sam as a good pilot and his equal in every way, we need only state that there is record of great feasting that the two enjoyed at a New Orleans French restaurant “dissipating on a ten-dollar dinner—tell it not to Ma!” which consisted of sheephead fish, oysters,

birds, mushrooms, and marvelous pastries for which the city has always been so justly famed.

Another time Sam went to a New Orleans clairvoyant celebrated under the name of Madame Caprell. The woman read Sam's fortune with remarkable shrewdness, among other things telling him, "—— you have written a great deal; you write well—but you are rather out of practice; no matter, you will be in practice some day;" and then she warned him against what even then was one of his besetting sins, "—— you use entirely too much tobacco; and you must stop it, mind, not moderate, but *stop* the use of it, totally; then I can almost promise you eighty-six, when you will surely die."

It has been pointed out that although Sam visited Madame Caprell in February, 1861, the good woman made no mention of the Civil War that was so soon to overwhelm the country, and give the river traffic a staggering blow from which it never recovered. A few weeks later Clemens had made his last trip to New Orleans.

Taking passage up the river on the *Uncle Sam* piloted by one of his friends, Bob Leavenworth, he barely escaped the blockade which was already being clamped down at Memphis. As they were steaming past Jefferson Barracks, a little south of St. Louis, a shot struck in front of the boat. When the second shot carried away half of the pilot house, Sam said to his friend, "I guess the authorities want us to wait a minute." The *Uncle Sam* was inspected and passed, but it was the last regular trip of any boat between New Orleans and St. Louis until after the Civil War was over.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE CONFEDERATE

SAM went back to Hannibal, and there discovered that his friends and acquaintances were all joining up with the Marion Rangers, a cavalry company that was being formed for the defense of the State. Sam arrived too late to get a horse and he had to be content with a mule named Paintbrush, so called because its tail resembled that type of article.

Paintbrush was a good goer except when he would come to a stream. The other horses and mules would swim right over, but old Paintbrush insisted upon *wading* through the water. The result would be that Paintbrush would disappear, then Sam, and finally even his hat would be beneath the water. Many a time Sam's friends gave him up for lost, but like a bad penny he would always slowly reappear near the opposite bank.

Someone in the company suggested that they should have short hair so that if they engaged the enemy hand to hand, the enemy could not get hold of it! One of the company found a pair of sheep-shears in the stable and acted as official barber. The shears were very dull, but the soldiers stood the pain of having their hair pulled out rather than cut.

After the election of officers, as was customary at the beginning of the Civil War, Sam found himself elevated to the rank of second lieutenant—which was not as great a glory as it might seem, for practically everyone in the company bore some title. There was a violent dispute between

the corporal and sergeant as to which was higher in rank. When the dispute was taken to the Captain for settlement, he gave out the decision that both were equal in rank!

Another time the company stopped at a farmhouse to ask for supplies. The door was opened by an angry woman: "You're secesh, ain't you?"

They admitted this and said that they were anxious to purchase provisions. Whereupon the good woman screamed, "Provisions! Provisions for secesh, and my husband a colonel in the Union Army. You get out of here!"

The irate woman reached for a hickory hoop-pole that stood near the door, and the *army* moved on.

Another time the soldiers were all sleeping in the hay-loft of some barn, and in the middle of the night, one of the number raised the alarm of fire. Someone had been smoking and neglected to extinguish his corncob! Sam woke up, and making a quick jump from the blaze, rolled out of the hay-window into the barnyard below! The rest of the company seized the burning hay and pitched it out of the same window. Having all the burning hay descend upon him, made Sam lose his temper completely, and he gave the whole company a sound cussing out—including the Captain!

A little later Clemens was incapacitated—incapacitated due to fatigue brought on by excessive retreating. The cause of the retreating was that the Confederates learned that Colonel Grant was in the vicinity leading his Federals. Years later Clemens met Grant when the latter was President. As he looked up in the face of the great man who had defeated him in Missouri and had done likewise with General Lee in Virginia, he felt a bit uneasy, so he looked up at Grant, and remarked quizzically:

"I'm a bit embarrassed, Mr. President. Are you?"

About six years later, Grant noticed Clemens across a large banqueting hall in Chicago where the Grand Army of the Republic was holding a reunion. Quick as a flash, Grant shouted across the space that separated the two men:

"I'm *not* embarrassed, Mr. Clemens. Are you?"

The company was also on the verge of mutiny, and wanted to depose their captain. For each friendly farm that they would come to, he would have himself put up in the farmhouse, and lived on the fat of the land—fried chicken and popovers and all kinds of good things—but he would make his men stay out in leaky stables and be thankful if they got the corn-pone which had been baked for the slaves.

The unsympathetic captain, the proximity of Colonel Grant, and torrential rains, caused the company finally to disband. Some authorities state that after this Clemens was detailed for river duty, captured, then confined in a tobacco-warehouse in St. Louis, and finally paroled. But there is no truth to the tale.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE TRIP WEST

WHEN Clemens went to Saint Louis, (where his family was now living) he learned that his brother Orion had recently been appointed secretary of the Nevada Territory. This was a fine position, but Orion was in difficulties: he had no money to take himself out to his new position. So when Sam came out of the Confederate service, Orion made a proposition,

"Look here, Sam, I'll tell you what I'll do. You have still a good deal of money salted away from your river work. If you'll pay our fares out to Nevada, I'll make you my private secretary when we get out there."

The brothers took the riverboat up to Saint Joseph, where the stagecoach line for the West had its first station. Sam paid three hundred dollars for their two fares to Nevada, with something extra for a large, unabridged dictionary that Orion insisted upon taking with him. On the twenty-sixth of July, 1861, they started on that strenuous but thoroughly delightful trip. The coach was pulled by sixteen prancing horses, and the only stops were for meals and changing the teams. *Roughing It* says, "Even at this day it thrills me through and through to think of the life, the gladness, and the wild sense of freedom that used to make the blood dance in my face on those fine Overland mornings."

The big dictionary was going to cause a good deal of trouble. For as they went down to ford a stream Sam got its sharp edges into his right side, and when the coach went up the opposite bank of the stream, Clemens would get it in his

left side. And when he tried to stretch out a little, the old dictionary would always be in the way. Clemens finally prevailed upon Orion to throw it out to the Indians so that they could acquire an education.

All the way out Sam had been hearing a lot about a famous outlaw named Slade who was spoken of as having a private cemetery of his own in which he had given some thirty-nine people free burial. Sam wished Slade no particular harm, but devotedly hoped that he would never meet him. One morning as they were having breakfast at an adobe station house, Orion nudged his brother and whispered:

"Mind what you do—Slade is sitting next to you!"

Clemens was very careful to mind his p's and q's, but just as the meal was over, out of the corner of his eye, he saw Slade seize the coffee-pot, and by the peculiar swish made by the coffee, intuitively felt that there was just *one* cup left. Slade turned to the young man next to him (it seems that outlaws are always so polite when you meet them socially) and said, "May I fill your cup."

Very hastily but firmly Sam declined. He had reason to congratulate himself all the remainder of the trip. For there was barely enough coffee left to fill Slade's own cup, and he felt certain that if he had taken the last cupful, he, Samuel Clemens, would have been number forty in the Slade free cemetery.

Every morning Sam had ham and eggs for breakfast:

"Nothing helps scenery like ham and eggs. Ham and eggs, and after these a pipe—an old, rank delicious pipe—ham and eggs and scenery,—a 'down-grade', a flying coach, a fragrant pipe, and a contented heart—these make happiness. It is what all the ages have struggled for."



In Salt Lake City, the brothers stopped off and called upon Brigham Young. Sam tried to make a big impression upon the Mormon leader, but all the wind was taken out of his sails, when Young asked Orion how old his son was!

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CARSON CITY

WHEN Sam reached Carson City, the capital of the Territory of Nevada, he discovered that there was no work attached to the job of being private secretary to his brother, and, what was much more important, there was no salary attached to it. But the new country fascinated Sam and he wrote home that it was full of gold, silver, copper, lead, coal, iron, quicksilver, marble, granite, chalk, plaster of Paris, thieves, murderers, desperadoes, Indians, Chinamen, Spaniards, gamblers, sharpers, coyotes, poets, preachers, and jackass-rabbits!

Although Carson City was chock-full of picturesque characters, Sam soon became the most picturesque of all who tramped the streets of the rapidly growing community: his bushy head of auburn hair, his piercing, twinkling eyes, his loose, lounging walk, never failed to command attention.

It was not long before Clemens succumbed to the mining fever, and with some companies he made the two hundred mile trek over hot, sandy cacti deserts to the Humboldt region which was supposed to be very rich in minerals. They had to cross that great waste stretch known as the Alkali Desert, whose sand is of unknown depth, and where the paths were strewn with carcasses of all kinds of animals, charred remains of wagons and coaches, not to speak of chains, bolts, and screws, which emigrants had discarded as hunger and thirst made them weaker, and anxious to lighten their burdens.

They put up a little cabin at Unionville, Humboldt, and, instead of finding heaps of silver as Sam had dreamed they would, their labors were rewarded only with delusions. One day Clemens thought he had made his fortune and he came back to the cabin staggering under the weight of a huge load of sparkling material that he felt sure contained a great deal of gold. His head was in the clouds until he found his discovery was only worthless mica!

Returning to Carson a different way, they were caught in a terrific snowstorm. One evening, certain they had lost their way, they built themselves a fire, improvised a little hut of snow and twigs and tried their best to keep from freezing to death. All through the night they bewailed the fact that they were miles and miles from civilization. In the morning when light came, they were amazed to discover that they had camped about twenty feet from a comfortable tavern whose lights they had not been able to discern in the snow and darkness!

Sam remained in Carson City for but a short interval of time before going off on another mining expedition—this time to Aurora, near Lake Mono, in the Esmeralda district. His mining partners were Bob Howland,\* the sheriff of Aurora, and Calvin H. Higbie, to whom *Roughing It* was later dedicated. The trio built themselves a little cabin, one which is today preserved as a Twain memorial in Idlewild Park, Reno, Nevada. It was removed to the park, in one piece, on a huge truck.

One day Clemens and Bob Howland were washing a pocket in which they expected to find a great deal of gold. But the sun was hot—as hot as only a Nevada sun can be—and, after Clemens had made several hundred trips

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\* The author had many talks with Bob Howland's widow before her death.

with buckets of water from a nearby stream, he, close to fainting from the excessive heat and subsequent fatigue, threw away his bucket and declared as emphatically as he could that nothing would ever make him carry another bucket to wash out any gold. And try as he would, Howland could not induce him to carry another bucket. A little later they sold their claim rights, and the next owner was enriched by more than a hundred thousand dollars, the fruit of very little work.

It was not long before the boys realized that far from "striking it rich" they would soon be starving. They struggled along on nothing but bread and cheese and water. yet they had their pride and wanted to keep up appearances. So they managed to get hold of a lot of discarded tins which had once contained expensive foods, and they stacked these outside the door of their shack.

"Gee, those guys sure live well!" said their friends as they passed by, enviously eyeing what they took to be the remains of a series of sumptuous banquets. The friends attempted to secure invitations to a meal, but the hungry partners ignored their hints, and kept the door barred against them.

But one day, somehow or other, the friends caught on to the trick, and that evening when the three returned, they discovered that every single can and container had been removed from their "front yard". Upon inquiry next day they learned that in their absence their friends had driven up in a wagon, into which all the pile had been shoveled and carried away!

Yet Sam kept up his spirits, as is exemplified by this extraction of a letter written home:

"I own one-eighth of the new Monitor Ledge, Clemens Company and money can't buy a foot of it because I know it

to contain our fortune.—” “I have struck my tent in Esmeralda, and I care for no mines but those which I can superintend myself.”

In his spare moments Sam managed to write some articles which, when published in the *Virginia City Enterprise*, attracted considerable attention. One in particular caught the eye of the editor, Joe Goodman—a burlesque report of a Fourth of July oration which began, “I was sired by the Great American Eagle and foaled by a continental dam.”

A few days after the burlesque’s appearance, Sam received the offer of the post as reporter for the *Enterprise* at \$25 a week. This was heartening as he had been refused employment as a reporter in Aurora. He immediately set out to walk to Virginia City, a distance of seventy miles. For he had no money either to hire or buy a mount. The trip, through very rugged and unsettled country, took him close to four days.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE VIRGINIA CITY ENTERPRISE

CLEMENS reached the *Enterprise* office covered from head to foot with dust, and looking for all the world like a tramp—and a mean one at that. When he was brought into the presence of Editor Goodman he said:

"My starboard leg seems to be unshipped. I'd like about one hundred yards of line; I think I am falling to pieces. My name is Clemens, and I've come to write for the paper."

Goodman gave the new reporter sound advice which Sam never forgot:

"Never say 'we learn so and so', or 'it is rumored'; but go to headquarters and get the absolute facts; then speak out and say it *is* so and so."

And then the celebrated editor added, half to himself and half aloud, "In the one case you are likely to be shot, and in the other you are pretty certain to be—but nevertheless you will preserve the public confidence."

In the beginning Sam signed many articles with the name "Josh" but as time went on, he did not like that name, and he dropped it, using simply Sam Clemens, until he adopted the one that made him so famous.

Sam's fellow workers loved to tease him—playing such pranks as to hide articles from his desk. As he did not care to give the attention a lamp needed, he always used a candle. The easiest way "to get his goat" was to hide this candle.

When he failed to find it on his desk, he would begin a slow, circular walk—a habit acquired in the pilot house—and all the while he would excoriate the thieves in language that blistered the walls of an office never accustomed to Sunday school language. He even went so far as to print a placard calling down the most horrible maledictions upon anyone who so much as touched the sacred candle. But one day he reached his desk to find both the placard and the candle gone!

After he had proved his worth by serving in the capacity of a local reporter, Goodman advanced Clemens to the position of transcribing the debates of the Territorial Legislature which sat in the capital, Carson City, just about twenty miles across the Divide from Virginia City. His reports of the debates soon began to be quoted up and down the coast. He found that his accounts were easily identified with one another, but not with their writer as a personality.

Clemens gave much thought to what pen-name he should adopt. Just as he was pondering what name to take, word reached him of the death in January 1863\*—of old Isaiah Sellers whom he had all so unintentionally wounded by his burlesque take-off. All of a sudden it flashed upon him that "Mark Twain", the pen-name that Sellers had used, was the one that he wanted. It was fresh, striking, and original, and would attract attention—besides it meant something, and would associate his work forever with those glorious days on the river—the most colorful period of his life.

"Mark Twain" was first signed to a Carson letter bearing the date of February 2, 1863. Members of the legislature immediately began addressing him as "Mark." No pen-name was more successful than this one, and within a surprisingly

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\* The news was false, for Sellers did not die till March 6, 1864, at Memphis.

short time practically everyone had forgotten the name with which he had been christened.

One day Mark (as we can now call him) complained to his pal Steve Gillis that none of the boys had given him a meerschaum pipe, although such a presentation had been made to several members of the staff after collections were taken up. This was a fine opportunity for some deviltry and a few days later Gillis tipped Sam off that he was going to be presented with a pipe, but that he was not supposed to know anything about it. The great night arrived, and Mark, before all his friends, was presented with what appeared to be a most costly meerschaum, and he gave his "extemporaneous" speech of thanks (which he had been most carefully preparing for days ahead) amidst much applause. When his speech was finished Sam treated all his friends to the best champagne procurable in Virginia City. The next day when Mark tried to smoke his prize it fell to pieces!

Mark became so infuriated and raised such a rumpus, that the only way his friends could obtain peace was to present him with a genuine meerschaum which they implied they had intended to give him all along—though, truthfully, they had never so intended.

Sam scarcely needed a watch in Virginia City, for the shots which rang out on the streets indicated the passing of the hours. In one of his letters home, Sam wrote that he had just heard five shots down in the street, and that since such things had to be reported, he would have to go out and investigate. Then, in a postscript, he added that the pistol-shots did their work well. It seems that a Jackson County Missourian had shot two of Sam's friends on the police force each through the heart.



As might be expected Clemens was given to playing jokes upon his readers. He wrote a very vivid story of how a "prehistoric" skeleton had been discovered some fifty miles out in the desert, and how the sheriff had insisted upon troop-ing all the way through that difficult and insufferably hot stretch of country so that he could hold the regular, formal inquest over the *corpus delicti*. Of course, this was but a figment of his vivid imagination.

Another time he wrote a very lurid account of how one Philip Hopkins who dwelt "just at the edge of the great pine forest which lies between Empire City and Dutch Nick's, had suddenly run amuck, and with a huge butcher knife had slain his wife and seven of his nine children." The murders had been committed in the most brutal fashion, after which Hopkins had actually scalped his wife, cut his own throat from ear to ear, then leaped on a horse, making for Carson City where he fell dead in front of the Magnolia Saloon.

The whole purpose of this account was to get even with the *San Francisco Bulletin* which had been poking fun and ridicule at certain Nevada Mines in which Sam was interested. As was the custom then, the San Francisco papers reprinted articles of interest to their readers. Everyone in Nevada knew that Philip Hopkins was an incorrigible bachelor and a notorious woman hater, and took Sam's article as a grand joke, but the *Bulletin* made itself the laughing stock of the whole West by printing it as a serious piece of news!

Artemus Ward came to Virginia City to lecture at the Opera House, intending to stay only one night, but he was so taken with Sam and the other congenial spirits that he remained for a month, making the *Enterprise* office his headquarters. Ward was at the zenith of his fame, and Clemens

learned much from him. One day, after an hilarious gathering, Sam and Artemus Ward determined to walk home on the roofs of the intervening houses. Suddenly their friends noticed a lonely policeman cocking his revolver and getting ready to shoot in their direction. Whereupon their friends shouted in unison:

"Wait a minute. What are you going to do?"

"I'm going to shoot those burglars," replied the officer.

"Don't for your life," was the answer. "Those are not burglars. That's Mark Twain and Artemus Ward."

Another time Artemus Ward was lecturing and he came to a sudden stop. Then he said:

"Ladies and gentlemen, we shall now have a little intermission," and then he added as though it had come to him as an afterthought, "But in order to pass the time away, I shall continue speaking."

Clemens was much taken with the way in which Ward advertised his lectures, by putting ads in the paper to the effect that "Mr. Artemus Ward will no longer be responsible for debts of *his own* contracting."

Everywhere he went Ward traveled with three enormous red trunks, and on each of them was painted in enormous white letters just what that particular trunk contained.

"Artemus Ward: His Sunday Clothes;" "Artemus Ward: His Lecture Clothes;" and "Artemus Ward: His Everyday Clothes."

The two houses of the last Nevada Territorial Legislature met in January, 1864. (Nevada was admitted as a state in October of the same year). A Third House, a burlesque organization, was promptly arranged, and Mark Twain was

unanimously elected as the Territorial governor. It was decided to make the first meeting a public one which would be addressed by Governor Mark Twain. In consenting to make the address Mark Twain wrote the "Secretary":

"I promise the public no amusement, but I do promise them a certain amount of instruction."

As might have been expected, the result was one of the most amusing talks of Twain's whole career.

As time went on, Clemens got into trouble with a rival editor, a Mr. Laird of the *Chronicle*, and a duel was arranged. Clemens picked as his second Steve Gillis who had the reputation of being the best shot in Nevada. Gillis took Clemens out a little early so that he could practice on a barn-door that had been erected a few feet from him. But although Clemens had been in the Confederate service, he was unable to hit the door! Then Gillis gave his friend up for lost, and in order to distract his attention from the fate of one whom he liked so well, he took a shot at a bird that was flying high up in the heavens. Gillis brought it down without any trouble—for being the best shot in a region like Nevada really meant something. At that precise moment the rival editor was working his way towards the hilltop. He had noticed the bird, heard the shot, and seen it fall. Getting very uneasy, he walked up to Clemens and said, "Mr. Clemens, did you shoot that bird." Before he could reply, Gillis answered for him:

"Of course he did, that was an easy shot for my friend." Whereupon the rival editor, Laird, threw away his pistol, and remarked to his second:

"I won't fight that devil Clemens: it would be nothing but simple suicide."

## CHAPTER NINE

### IN SAN FRANCISCO

ALTHOUGH Clemens escaped from the duel unscathed, a friend informed him that a warrant had been issued for his arrest. Governor Nye of the Territory had determined to make an example of so prominent a person as Mark Twain to discourage others from continuing the practice. Sam just managed to get over the border into California before the sheriff could lay hands on him.

He soon secured a berth on the *San Francisco Call* where he worked for six months. Then the editor called him in and said, "Clemens, we don't need you any more."

Clemens looked at the editor and thanked him for his courtesy, and remarked:

"I would like to know the real reason why you don't want me any more?"

"The real reason is that you are too lazy and good-for-nothing."

"Well you *are* pretty stupid," replied Twain in his quizzical manner. "It took you some six months to learn that I am lazy and good-for-nothing, but I knew it the day I came!"

Then as Twain wandered up and down the streets looking for a job, he met an acquaintance who was presenting a skit in one of the local theatres. "Look here," the man said, "I am in need of some good jokes for my performance. If you will write me out ten of your best, I'll give you a ten dollar bill."

"Nothing doing," Twain answered decidedly, "If I was seen with ten dollars people would think I had stolen them, and if you used any good jokes on your long-suffering audiences, they would know for a certainty you had hooked them."

At this time Clemens became quite friendly with F. Bret Harte who, living in San Francisco, was making a name for himself in California journalism. These two men remained good friends until they were so ill-advised as to collaborate on a play called "Ah Sin" which burned brightly on the stage for a short space, then flickered out completely. Then their friendship broke—doubtless the old, old story of each blaming the other for the failure. But while the friendship lasted, Harte's encouragement and example had a very beneficial influence upon Clemens' literary productions.

Once, sometime in 1898 when the author's father mentioned Bret Harte to Twain in casual conversation, the latter stopped and said:

"Dr. Jim, I don't want you ever to mention that name again in my presence."

The author had the privilege of knowing an old lady named Mrs. Tingley Lawrence who, as a charming girl, had the pleasure of befriending Sam during these San Francisco days. One evening she was going to give a serious talk at a church benefit. As she was preparing it a few days ahead, some friends told her that they had met Sam Clemens who announced his intention of attending the lecture, and generally cutting-up and laughing whether or not the lecture was humorous. Poor Miss Tingley\* didn't know what to do. She realized full well that Sam was quite capable of doing this, and could so turn her very serious lecture into a joke. She finally determined that the only thing to do was to meet the

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\* Mrs. Lawrence's maiden name.

enemy on his own ground. So, without telling a soul, she prepared a humorous lecture. Thus when Sam laughed he would be laughing *with* her, and not at her. The plan worked perfectly, and Sam himself congratulated her upon her splendid humorous talk, "the best I have ever heard delivered by a woman."

Mrs. Lawrence recalls that another time an entertainment was arranged, and Clemens was put on the program to give an organ solo. This elicited a great deal of surprise from all his friends—for he was not supposed to know anything at all about any musical instrument—in fact, his friends recalled that many a time he had told them that he considered it effeminate and namby-pamby for a man to play either the organ or piano. The night of the entertainment the hall was packed and jammed with all of Sam's friends who had paid fifty cents each to see what kind of an organist he was. When it came Clemens' turn, he mounted the platform, and after making five or six deep and gracious bows, he sat down at the organ, and with great force dropped one hand down on the key-board and held it there making the most horrible discords. His friends sat in keen expectancy thinking it must simply be the raucous prelude to some soft and melodious composition. When he raised his hand, his friends all smiled and told each other, "Now the lovely part begins." But Sam only slammed his left hand on the key-board with even greater force and made a more horrible noise than with his other hand—if that were possible. Then the meeting broke up in a near-riot. Those who had spent their money to hear Sam play the organ, became the laughing-stock of the whole city, and each and everyone who was present became heartily sick and tired of hearing the salutation:

"Sam took you in pretty neatly, didn't he?"

As he wandered about the city, Clemens found that the city police force was very inefficient and lazy. They seemed to be intent only upon drinking beer and loafing. One day he found a patrolman sound asleep on a corner. So he went into a grocery store and secured a large cabbage leaf. Thereupon he returned and commenced to fan the sleeping officer. Of course a large and derisive crowd collected, and the sleeping guardian of the law awoke to the same sense of embarrassment as did the famous Mr. Pickwick the time that he was put in the pound.

This had a beneficial effect upon the police force, but Clemens was tipped off that the police were out to get revenge upon their reformer, and that he might find the country air more healthful for a few months.

## CHAPTER TEN

### ANGELS CAMP

CLEMENS fortunately met his old chum Steve Gillis who insisted upon his going up to Angels Camp with him, and there to try his hand at some silver mining. Unsuccessful at mining before, Sam determined to go back to San Francisco with at least some silver, no matter what happened. And he did, although he had great difficulty in holding on to his final silver quarter, which he had brought to Angels Camp.

Clemens and the Gillis brothers lived in a little cabin on Jackass Hill, just outside Angels Camp. Bill Gillis, Steve's younger brother, told the author of this book that Clemens loved to tell stories about his Mississippi river days; and of how he acquired his great fondness for Shakespeare from a fellow pilot named George Ealer who often recited aloud long passages from the plays with admirable effect.

Shortly before his death, Will Rogers, an ardent admirer of Twain and all his works, went up and down all the old mining camps in quest of the four-poster in which Clemens and the Gillis brothers had slept—but without success.

Although Clemens found no gold or silver at Angels Camp, he did obtain something much better. One night while he and some fellow miners were sitting around the tavern stove, swapping yarns, he heard from the lips of old



Ben Coon, about the famous jumping frog named Daniel Webster who could outjump any other frog, until one sad day just before a jumping match he was filled full of quail shot by a dishonest stranger.

For fifty years they have had Annual Frog Jumping matches at Angels Camp. The contests are arranged similar to horse races. Owners bring their frogs from every part of the state, and the names of both frog and owner are entered. Then, when the great day arrives, three or four frogs are put on a line, and upon a given signal they hop away. The frog that jumps the furthest in one leap is declared the winner. One day the author of this book was the Judge. There must have been about fifty thousand people present to witness the event. A frog had to be disqualified because its owner was trying to make it jump further by the use of an electric battery. Another frog attracted much attention because it was the only frog which had ever been arrested for nonpayment of the "frog tax." Its owner had moved heaven and earth to have a "frog tax" passed, and then had promptly refused to pay. All to attract attention to his entry.

The year the author was judge, a frog named Hooligan jumped five feet in one leap, and won the prize of fifty dollars. Hooligan's owner was overheard to say:

"It's lucky for you, Hooligan, you won; or you would be frog legs tonight."

But since the owner was a shifty-looking epicure, Hooligan probably did not avoid the frying pan for so very long!

The Gillis brothers loved to play tricks on Clemens. Once Steve brought home some fruit, and Sam, who had come

back to the cabin early from an unsuccessful mining expedition, promptly became curious.

"What are they," asked Clemens.

"Try one and see," replied Gillis.

Gillis immediately went away so he couldn't be interrogated further, and Clemens, left alone with the fruit, became more and more curious. At last he cautiously took a bite: an action which he regretted for many days afterwards, for the fruit belonged to the cactus family, and each bite contained a thousand little sharp splinter-like affairs that stuck to Sam's tongue, and all the inside of his mouth. Needless to say, when Steve returned to the cabin that night with a most innocent looking countenance, he didn't receive a very cordial welcome—at least not from Sam Clemens.

A frequent visitor at the Gillis cabin was a genial fellow named Dick Stoker, (Dick Baker of *Roughing It*) who had retired from the world to this peaceful hillside with his famous cat, Tom Quartz. All readers of *Roughing It* will recall the delightful story of Dick Baker's cat.

On rainy days, before the big, open fire of the cabin, Steve and Jim Gillis, another brother, loved to tell amusing yarns by the hour, and many of them had to do with the fascinating life of Stoker "forty-six, and gray as a rat."

Not so very far away lived a pocket-miner by the name of Carrington who had two pretty daughters so sweet and innocent that they were known as "Chapparal Quails." All the young men within a radius of fifteen or twenty miles paid court to them, and on Sunday afternoons so many horses were tied in front of their cabin that it resembled a church service. One afternoon Sam and Billy Gillis took the girls for a walk, but lost their way, and they found Mother Carrington sitting up awaiting their return. Sam was blamed

for having kept them out so late, and was being dismissed with parental anger when he smelt bacon frying:

"But do you realize, ma'am, how tired and hungry we are?"

But while the mother remained obdurate, Sam noticed a guitar, which he picked up, struck the cords and began to sing, "Fly Away, Pretty Moth" and then "Araby's Daughter."

The result was that Mother Carrington weakened and they all stayed for a most sumptuous repast of deliciously crisp bacon, corn bread, and plenty of hot coffee.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### BACK TO SAN FRANCISCO

WHEN Clemens was appointed San Francisco correspondent of the *Virginia City Enterprise*, he was able to return again to the city that he loved so much. Artemus Ward appeared in San Francisco on another lecture tour, and one night Clemens told his friend of the Jumping Frog. The teller thought little of the story, but Artemus Ward was delighted, and made Sam promise to write it out for a humorous book that he was about to edit.

So, more in order to please his friend than for any other reason, Sam wrote out the story. It arrived in New York too late to be included in the book (mails in those days were very slow and uncertain), but it appeared in the *Saturday Press* under the title of "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog," November 18, 1865.

Sam might well have ceased to use his penname of Mark Twain, for the New York printer was unacquainted with the name—being so far away from any river terms—that he thought it must have been a misprint for Mike McSwain, and under that Irish spelling the name first appeared. Clemens came very near to concluding that it would be foolish to use a name that was so liable to be misread by Eastern printers, but perseverance being one of the characteristics of the Clemens family, he adhered doggedly to its use. And the whole world can be grateful for his decision.

Later on Sam was to think that the idea for the jumping frog story came originally from the Greek. He and many

others were misled by the fact that its essential plot appeared in a Greek text book. When questioned the Greek scholar confessed that he had translated Mark Twain's story into Greek, but that he had not bothered giving credit because he thought the story too well known for that, and that his readers would know at once it came from Mark Twain.

The Jumping Frog Story was tremendously popular, and may be said to have jumped around the world. Shortly after its appearance two Englishmen were talking. One said, "Who is this Daniel Webster we've been hearing so much about." The second one said, "Darned if I know."—Then he corrected himself, "Yes, I do, he's the Jumping Frog in Mark Twain's story."

Many pictures were drawn, and published in various periodicals, of Mark Twain showing him with the body of a green frog above which was set his own shaggy head with his sparkling eyes. James Russell Lowell remarked that it was just the thing that the American people needed to cheer them up after the Civil War.

### THE LICK HOUSE BALL

In an old newspaper the author came across a playful account of a ball given to Mark Twain at the Lick House by some of his friends.

Clemens tells us that he received a long letter from a young lady friend, and that the letter she wrote took two hours to wade through. And then the important message of the letter was in the postscript! And in this postscript the young lady begged for information about the fashions which were displayed at the Lick House Ball. Clemens obliged her in a description which is truly Pickwickian in its atmosphere.

The first part of Clemens' answer deals with the 'nobility' who were represented by His Grace the Duke of Benicia.

the Countess of San Jose, Lord Blessyou, and Lord Geeminy. A rich carpet of mauve domestique, forty dollars a yard, imported from Massachusetts, or the kingdom of New Jersey. Clemens tells us that he tried to lease some diamonds for his wife,\* who had been invited, but others had been before him and 'cleaned out everything' as they say in the West. There was just one diamond left, but it had already been engaged by the Countess of Goat Island.

Mrs. F. F. L. wore a superb *habille* of chambry gauze; over this a charming Figaro jacket, made of mohair, or horsehair, or something of that kind; over this again, a Raphael blouse of *cheveux-de-la-reine* trimmed around the bottom with lozenges formed of insertions, and around the top with bronchial troches; nothing could be more graceful than the contrast between the lozenges, and troches; over the blouse she wore a *robe de chambre* of regal magnificence, made of Faille silk and ornamented with macaroon (usually spelled macaroni) buttons set in black *guipre*. On the roof of her bonnet was a menagerie of rare and beautiful bugs and reptiles, and under the eaves thereof a counterfeit of the early bird whose specialty it has been to work destruction upon such things since time began. To say that Mrs. L. was never more elaborately dressed in her life, would be to express an opinion within the range of possibility, at least—to say that she did or could look otherwise than charming would be a deliberate departure from the truth.

Mrs. Wm. M. S. wore a gorgeous dress of silk bias, trimmed with tufts of *ponceau* feathers in the Frondeur style; elbowed sleeves made of chicories; plaited Swiss habit-shirt, composed of Valenciennes *a la vielle*, embellished with a delicate nansook insertion scalloped at the edge; Lonjumeau jacket of maize-colored Geralda, set off with bagnettes,

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\* Of course, he was making up that he was married.

bayonets, clarinets, and one thing or other. Beautiful rice-straw bonnet of Mechlin Tulle, trimmed with devices cut out of sole leather representing aigrettes, and arastras—or asters, whichever it is. The body of the robe was of zero velvet, guffered, with a square pelerine of *solferino poil de chevre* amidships. The fan used by Mrs. B. was of real palm leaf and cost four thousand dollars—the handle alone costs six bits. Her head dress was composed of a graceful cataract of white chantilly lace surmounted by a few artificial worms and butterflies, and tasteful tarantulas done in jet. It is impossible to conceive of anything more enchanting than the toilet or the lady who wore it.

Now, do you know, Oenone, however, I hear the stately tread of that inveterate chambermaid. She always finds this room in a state of chaos, and she always leaves it as trim as a parlor. But her instincts impel her to march in here just when I feel least like marching out. I do not know that I have ever begged permission to write only a few moments longer—never with my tongue at any rate, although I may have looked it with my impressive glass eye. But she cares nothing for such spooney prayers. She is a soldier in the army of the household; she knows her duty, and she allows nothing to interfere with its rigid performance. She reminds me of U. S. Grant; she marches in her grand military way to the center of the room, and comes to an "order arms" with her broom and her slop bucket; then she bends on me a look of uncompromising determination and I reluctantly haul down my flag. I abandon my position—I evacuate the premises—I retire in good order—I vamoose the ranch. Because that look of hers says in plain crisp language, "I don't want you here. If you are not gone in two minutes I propose to move immediately upon your works."

Clemens heard of an expedition going to the Hawaiian

Islands, and he made arrangements with the *Sacramento Union* to go as their representative, and report, in a series of letters, life, trade, agriculture, and the general aspect of the islands. In his own words "to remain there a month and ransack the islands."

He sailed from San Francisco, March 7, 1866, on the good ship *Ajax*. This was the first of his many sea trips. He was fascinated with the brand new experience, and he bothered the sailors to death by asking them a thousand and one questions about the names of the different sails, of the parts of the ship, and what were the duties of the different officers, etc., etc.



## CHAPTER TWELVE

### HAWAII

CLEMENS was much taken with the quaintness of Honolulu. He spoke of riding in a buggy that had been brought to the islands by Captain Cook in 1779, and which was drawn by a horse that must surely have been there when the Captain first reached the islands judging by its lameness and general inefficiency.

A good part of the time Clemens gave himself over to loafing, and a remark that he made about the lassitude of the climate is still remembered by the natives today:

"When you reach Honolulu, you simply feel like sitting and thinking, and after a while you simply feel like sitting."

Clemens became quite friendly with a young fellow named Burlingame who was the son of the American ambassador to China. One day Burlingame asked Clemens to go for a walk with him, but Sam offered some excuse due to the heat. "But there is a scriptural injunction that you should go with me," returned the youth. "How is that?" asked Twain. "Why," replied the young fellow with a smile, "Does not the Scripture say that if a man ask thee to go with him a mile, go with him Twain?"

But the climate really did affect Clemens, and the time came when he caught some tropical fever and was obliged to lie on the flat of his back. When he was in this position, he was told that a rowboat had arrived in the harbor of Honolulu after being out in the open sea for over forty days—

the ship *Hornet* having burned in mid-ocean. The boat was manned by fifteen starving wretches who had managed to subsist all that time on rations that would normally have been for ten days only.

Here was a magnificent scoop, and one that many a reporter would sell his soul for, but Sam was on the flat of his back. Nothing daunted, he ordered that he should be brought down on a stretcher to the wharf-hospital where the men were in bed, all recuperating from their terrible fasting and exposure. The men were not too weak to give their story at length, and Clemens took it all down in short-hand as he lay in his own bed.

Then he spent the whole night in writing up the wonderful and unique experiences of these men, and, though exhausted, he had it ready in the morning to be taken down to a ship preparing to sail for San Francisco. The messenger took his time and reached the pier just after the ship had left the dock!

But the ship had that very minute swung out from the pier, and the fellow with a mighty effort threw the pile of manuscript towards the deck. It landed half on and half off, but was seized before it fell by a sailor who was watching the messenger's clever attempt to redeem his procrastination along the way.

The account was published by the *Sacramento Union* and was a wonderful scoop—for the readers up and down the coast had had the bare announcement of the disaster, but no details, and they were avid for the complete account which Twain's interview gave.

The article was really a series of interviews with all the fourteen survivors, and so presented the disaster from as many viewpoints, but all wonderfully harmonized and coordinated by a journalistic genius. The editor was so pleased that he gave Sam a substantial bonus of several hundred dollars.

Clemens found Honolulu much more attractive than San Francisco: "In place of the grand mud-colored brown fronts of San Francisco, I saw dwellings built of straw, adobe, and cream-colored pebble-and-shell-conglomerated coral, cut into oblong blocks and laid in cement; also a great number of neat white cottages, with green window-shutters; in place of front yards like billiard-tables with iron fences around them, I saw these homes surrounded by ample yards, thickly clad with green grass, and shaded by tall trees, through whose dense foliage the sun could scarcely penetrate."

The multiplicity of the Hawaiian cats profoundly impressed Clemens, "I saw cats—Tom cats, Mary Ann cats, long-tailed cats, bob-tailed cats, blind cats, one-eyed cats, cross-eyed cats, gray cats, black cats, white cats, yellow cats, striped cats, spotted cats, tame cats, wild cats, singed cats, individual cats, groups of cats, companies of cats, regiments of cats, armies of cats, multitudes of cats, millions of cats, and all of them sleek, fat, lazy, and sound asleep."

The great volcano of Kilauea and its lava bed has never been more vividly described than by Clemens:

"Shortly the crater came into view. I have seen Vesuvius since, but it was a mere toy, a child's volcano, soup-kettle, compared to this. Mount Vesuvius is a shapely cone thirty-six hundred feet high; its crater an inverted cone only three hundred feet deep, and not more than a thousand feet in

diameter, if as much as that; its fires meagre, modest, and docile. But here was a vast, perpendicular, walled cellar, nine hundred feet deep in some places, thirteen hundred in others, level-floored, and *ten miles in circumference!* Here was a yawning pit upon whose floor the armies of Russia could camp, and have room to spare!"

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE REPORTING OF MARK TWAIN'S FIRST LECTURE

AFTER returning to San Francisco in August, 1866, following his trip to the Hawaiian Islands, Clemens was at a loss as to what to do. He disliked intensely the monotonous humdrum of newspaper work. Hitherto there had been no help for it, but now several possible openings presented themselves: to make a reporting trip around the world; to write a book about his late experiences; and lastly to deliver a lecture on the Hawaiian Islands. This last plan seemed the most attractive; but never having been on the platform, he was extremely doubtful of the wisdom of making an attempt. Unable to come to a decision himself, he resolved to seek advice at his old newspaper office.

It was raining hard and he arrived wet through, his frock coat collar turned up about his neck, presenting an exceedingly bedraggled appearance. After hesitating for a minute or two Clemens pulled a large roll of manuscript out of his pocket, where it had been but imperfectly protected from the rain, and placed it diffidently on the editor's desk. Clearing his throat he nervously said:

"I wish you'd read that over and give me your opinion about it. I think it might do for a lecture."

"A lecture!" ejaculated the editor.

"Yes, it's about the Islands. I've been to Bowman, and I've been to Harte and Stoddard, and the rest of the fellows, and they all say, "don't do it, Mark; it will hurt your literary reputation."

In the meantime the editor was glancing through the manuscript and every now and then he would nod his head approvingly. Clemens moved over to the fire against which he planted his back and anxiously waited for the editor's verdict.

After what seemed to Mark Twain a lifetime, the editor looking up from the manuscript, said:

"Mark, which do you need more at present, money or literary reputation?"

It seems that Clemens could be profane when occasion required, for he replied without a moment's hesitation:

"Money, by G. . . . .!"

"Then go to the Maguire, hire the Academy of Music, on Pine Street, and there deliver this lecture. With the prestige of your recent letters from the Hawaiian Islands, you will crowd the Theater!"

In recalling this scene years later, Clemens commented, "The audacity of the proposition was charming; it seemed fraught with practical wisdom, however."

A few days later while Clemens was walking along the street in San Francisco worrying about his lecture, he was introduced to J. Ross Browne, the famous correspondent. They took to each other as soon as they met. Clemens said to his new-found friend:

"Browne, you are just the man I want to see." Clemens then explained that he had to give a lecture, that he was new to the platform, and that he was in a quandary. Browne had had a great deal of lecture experience. So he invited Clemens to his Oakland house for the few days previous to the lecture, and urged the neophyte to try out his material on his house full of children. The uproarious response of the Browne family did much to encourage Clemens in his trying ordeal.

Clemens went to Tom Maguire, the theatre manager, and was somewhat reassured when that veteran of the stage

seconded the advice, and rented him the handsome new Academy of Music at half price. Clemens then did a hundred and fifty dollars worth of advertising and printing which made him "the most distressed and frightened creature on the Pacific coast."

*The Evening Bulletin* for Monday, October 1, 1866 tells us about Clemens' attempt to escape:

"Mark Twain: Those who go to hear Mark Twain's discourse of the Hawaiian Islands at the Academy of Music tomorrow evening may confidently count on having their money's worth, and something to boot. He will sketch the salient points of life at the Islands with a graphic but genial hand. His humor is broad and unctuous, while he is a clear thinker and shrewd observer.

*"Sensational Rumors*— It is reported about town—we know not upon how reliable an authority—that last night Mark Twain had an attack of stage fright in advance, and was so overcome at the near prospect of having to make a first appearance before a metropolitan audience that his courage broke down and he secreted himself in the baggage room of the Occidental, with the intention of taking the four o'clock boat to-day, and making his escape to Sacramento. The panic was produced, it is said, by the contemplation of his own huge posters ornamenting the dead-walls and bulletin boards through the City.

"P. S. We learn just as we are going to press that the holders of tickets for the lecture this evening engaged a police force to be on hand at the departure of the Sacramento boat, in order to apprehend the fugacious lecturer, and prevent the contemplated swindle. Owing to these precautionary measures, Mark's attempt at evasion will probably be frustrated and the lecture will, we hope, come off according to announcements.

"P. P.S. We stop the press to inform our readers that Mark Twain has been secured and has after the administration of one dozen bottles of Mrs. Winslow's soothing syrup, become reconciled to the situation. He will positively appear, but holds the public responsible."

The following quotations from *Roughing It* show that Clemens felt very much like running away, even though he did not actually attempt to do so:

"For other people there was facetiousness in the last line of my posters, but to me it was plaintive with a pang when I wrote it:

'Doors open at 7:30; the trouble will begin at 8:00.'

"I ate nothing on the last of the three eventful days—I only suffered . . . . . I thought of suicide, pretended illness, flight, I thought of these things in earnest, for I was very miserable and scared."

As the victim looked through a little hole in the curtain he saw the vast hall filling up with people, his knees began to tremble as they never had before. As the clock struck half-past eight, and the lecture-sponsors forced him out on the stage, and saw to it that he knew all the exits were closely guarded, Sam realized the bitter irony of the announcement meant to be as funny, "The trouble will begin at eight o'clock."

Poor Clemens limped slowly on to the center of the platform, and it looked as though any moment he would drop into a dead faint. The hearty laughs were much concerned because it didn't look as though they would be able to put their risible powers into play, and so earn the dollar which each had been promised. Clemens stood shaking and trembling in the center of the stage and then he began in a very faint and far away voice:



"Julius Caesar is dead, Mark Antony is dead, Shakespeare is dead, Washington is dead, Benjamin Franklin is dead, and I am very far from well myself."

That set the audience off and the hearty laughers couldn't even hear themselves laugh—a thing that didn't happen often in their professional endeavor. Before the evening was over, everyone was too weak to leave their seats, from laughing so much.

That the lecture was well received is proved by the reviews\* which appeared, October 3rd, the day after its delivery, in the principal papers.

*The Daily Alta California* said:—

"The Academy of Music from the footlights to the rear row of the family circle was densely packed last evening on the occasion of the lecture by Mark Twain. The crowd went there to pass a jolly hour and they did. They began to laugh when the inimitable humorist made his appearance. They scarcely stopped when leaving the portals of the building. Momus reigned supreme in that edifice last night. The theme of the lecturer was the 'Sandwich Islands' and he started out by paraphrasing the first sentence of the Declaration of Independence—when it became necessary for him to have such an audience they should learn to bear the affliction patiently. Then he went on to give a succinct description of the Islands, their geography, productions, climate, and religion of the inhabitants, etc. But momentarily, almost, he enlivened his descriptions with side splitting similes, grotesque imagery, and fearfully ludicrous stories pertinent to the particular branch of the subject under discussion. At times, he would soar to the sublime, and his description of the Volcano of Kilauea was as graphic and magnificent a piece of word painting as we have listened to for many a day. As an entirety, the lecture was preeminently humorous.

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\* Discovered in old papers, and republished for first time.

There was, however, much information in this effort which never appeared in any history of the Hawaiian Islands. The lecturer was vociferously applauded at frequent intervals, and at the close the crowd brought him out to be convulsed with his humorous apology, as funny as the legitimate discourse of the hour. Mark Twain has thoroughly established himself as the most piquant and humorous writer and lecturer on the coast since the days of the late lamented John Phoenix."

*The Bulletin* had the following:—

"The Academy of Music was "stuffed", to use an expression of the lecturer, to repletion last night, on the occasion of the delivery of 'Mark Twain's' (Samuel Clemens') lecture on the Sandwich Islands. It is perhaps fortunate that the King of Hawaii did not arrive in time to attend, for unless he had gone early he must have been turned away, as many others were who could not gain admittance. Nearly every seat in the house had been engaged beforehand, and those who came last had to put up with the best they could, while many were obliged to stand up all the evening.

"The appearance of the lecturer was the signal for applause, and to the time he closed, the greatest good feeling existed. He commenced by apologizing for the absence of an orchestra. He wasn't used to getting up operas of this sort. He had engaged a musician to come and play, but the trombone player insisted upon having some other musicians to help him. He had hired the man to work and wouldn't stand any such nonsense, and so discharged him on the spot.

"The lecturer then proceeded with his subject, and delivered one of the most interesting and amusing lectures ever given in this city. It was replete with information of that character which is seldom got from books, describing all those minor traits of character, customs and habits which are only noted by a close observer, and yet the kind of information which gives the most correct idea of the people

described. Their virtues were set forth generously, while their vices were touched off in a humorous style, which kept the audience in a constant state of merriment . . . . . Important facts concerning the resources of the Islands were given, interspersed with pointed anecdotes and side-splitting jokes. Their history, traditions, religion, politics, aristocracy, royalty, manners and customs, are all described in brief, and in the humorous vein peculiar to the speaker. It would be impossible to do justice to the lecture in a synopsis, and as it will probably be repeated, we shall not attempt it. The lecturer kept his audience constantly interested and amused for an hour and a half and the lecture was unanimously pronounced a brilliant success. After its close, and as the audience had risen to leave, he was called out again, and in his funny style apologized for "the infliction," giving as an excuse that he was about writing a book on the Sandwich Islands, and needed funds for its publication . . . . Although Mr. Sam Clemens has been accused of unfairness; we think that his forthcoming work will show that he has been an industrious collector of facts. . . . The lecture was superior to Artemus Ward's "Babes in the Wood" in point of humor. It evinced none of the straining after effect that was manifested by the great showman, and possessed some solid qualities, to which Ward can make no pretensions. As a humorous writer Mark Twain stands in the foremost rank, while his effort of last evening affords reason for the belief that he can establish an equal reputation as a humorous and original lecturer."

*The Chronicle* was just as warm in its praise:—

"Every part of the house was crowded last night on the occasion of Mark Twain's lecture on the Sandwich Islands. The dress circle and the parquet were thronged with fashionably dressed ladies, while a very large number of gentlemen, unable to obtain seats, ranged themselves in a standing posture

against the walls, and there remained until the conclusion of the lecture. The shouts of applause with which the lecturer was greeted at his appearance on the stage attested the high esteem in which he is held by the public of San Francisco. In the space of about five minutes, Mark had made himself quite at home with his audience . . . . Mark chatted away to his audience very confidentially for some time, making joke after joke, and relating humorous stories in the most amusingly dry manner, and peals of laughter proved how well his audience was pleased . . . . . proceeded to give an amusing description of the native and foreign inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands, spiced . . . . with anecdotes and dry jokes, which never failed to bring down the house. From the beginning to the end, the interest was never allowed to lag . . . Taken altogether, Mark Twain's lecture may be pronounced one of the greatest successes of the season. His voice was rather weak, but a little practice in speaking in large halls, would very speedily correct this fault."

*The Examiner* adds:—

"No doubt the audience was disposed to be good natured; but also no doubt, they were determined not to be bored with impunity nor to indorse a humbugging lecturer because he was a good writer. He came before them; he began to speak, and in five minutes all doubt as to his ability as a lecturer was dispelled. The most delightful discovery made was, we think, this: that he speaks as he writes. The same unexpected jokes—the same inimitable drollery—the same strong sense embodied in quaint phraseology. He is sometimes a little too rough; of that there can be no doubt. He verges, indeed, occasionally upon coarseness; but his roughness is the roughness of the crude diamond, through the opaque incrustation of which flashes ever and anew a ray of that fountain of light which is the essence of the gem. We have no intention of analyzing his lecture of last night.

It is to be hoped that he will repeat it, and it is much better that people should judge by themselves as to the matter than we should attempt to direct their taste. With the style alone we are dealing now—and the style is excellent.”

The only note of criticism was struck by the *Golden Era* under date of October 7th:—“Mark Twain had a good house, for which doubtless ere this he has returned thanks, and gathered in the net receipts. The Press have unanimously spoken of his effort in the most favorable terms. Now I intend to be a little perverse and speak what I think. I shall venture on the terrible risk of criticising Mark Twain. It is a perilous undertaking. He wields a pen mighty in ridicule and sarcasm, and woe unto him who provokes his displeasure. Venturing on such an undertaking, one sees before him the dreadful results which have befallen the *Alta*, the San Francisco police, and Minister Harris. Still there is a possibility that the beneficiary may be disgusted with this uniformity of praise. Perhaps he may admire the spectacle of one person candid enough to express an opinion. Therefore I will cross the Rubicon.

“Mark’s lecture on the whole was a success. He made a number of very good hits, and I was agreeably disappointed at finding the manner of delivery to be essentially Mark Twainish. For, as a general thing, you know, writers have disappointed public expectation on becoming speakers. And indeed it is not right that in one person should be combined so many different species of talent. It is enough that one is a good writer. Let the gifts be distributed equally. Mark might have spoken louder at times. The great difficulty experienced by new speakers is that they cannot keep their voice up to one pitch. Unknown to themselves it will fall below the hearing of those distantly removed. So when they cannot hear what you are saying, the funniest things, as well as most splendid oratory, fail helplessly. I hate to think of

the ordeal of facing an audience myself. It is a terrible thing to a person in diffident circumstances. Mark's gestures might be improved. Warwick might therein benefit him. But that must pass too. The description of the crater of Kilauea was very well written. But we will not endorse the opinion of one of the dailies, which pronounces it in substance to have been a most effective piece of oratory. Had the speaker been any other than Mark, no such opinion would have been delivered. Now, the host of Mark's friends and admirers need not get angry at this. Let them admire a little truth and candor. These articles are very scarce in the world and should be prized when brought out for inspection at such a terrible risk. I know how the revengeful Mark pursued the Fitz Smythe. I saw him wage a war most destructive and harrowing to the police. I witnessed him as he tossed repeatedly aloft on the twin horns of sarcasm and ridicule Harris and various other people who had crossed his path. Yet despite their hate, I persist in saying that Mark's gestures were not the ideal of grace. I trust Mark will attain to eminence in his new path. I have no envy for the success of those who embark in such undertakings. It is a thorny road. Humor is a very dangerous thing to venture on, either in speech or writing. You may talk hard gradgrind facts to your audience by the hour, calling the simplest things by the hardest and most incomprehensible names, and your array of hard-twisted old male and female faces will sit and admire you and take it all for pure inspiration, providing they do not understand a word or gather an idea; but should you try to be funny and fail to raise a laugh, may you be spared the misery of hearing the comments of your audience as they leave the house.

"By the way, Mark, you applied a most admirable plaster to the few scratches you gave the missionaries. But then we all have to do that. I might say more. Even as it is I shall

be accused of jealousy. Believe me, I am not jealous. Probably you care not anyway. I have fought it all out on that line, and perhaps failed. You will doubtless know better what I mean in time. With the pride of a Californian I hope to see Mark Twain outrival Artemus Ward *et id omne genus*. For Mark's humor is his own, while much of Ward's is begged and borrowed. The dailies are to blame for this. Their uniformity of praise is disgusting. They are all afraid of you, Mark; afraid of your pen. And I always was possessed by a devil of contrariness."

Fourteen hundred dollars was the amount realized from Clemens' first lecture, a princely sum for those days.

The steamboat pilot, miner, reporter, adventurer, knew that at last he had struck his gait.

The time passed quickly what with lecturing and being entertained, but he made arrangements to start for New York on the steamer *America*, sailing from San Francisco, December 15, 1866. Such was Clemens' popularity that *The Weekly Examiner* which came out in the city the day he sailed, quoted him *at length* no less than *five* times!

On May 6, 1867, Mark Twain lectured to a tremendous audience in New York's Cooper Union (then the largest hall in America) on "Kanakadom, or the Sandwich Islands." It was either at this lecture or a little later that Twain's chairman introduced him as follows:

"I know only two things about your speaker: one is, he has never been in jail; and the second is, I don't know the reason why."

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### INNOCENTS ABROAD

MARK TWAIN sailed for Europe on the Steamer *Quaker City*, June 8th, 1867, on the first Holy Land Pleasure Excursion ever to be organized in the United States. He was to write the Declaration of Independence for the American traveler: because before his day Americans had believed everything that was told them in Europe. Mark Twain never let the European guides forget that he was from Missouri!

After a pleasant trip across the ocean the *Quaker City* stopped at the Azores where, after treating his friends to a few drinks, Clemens was presented with a bill which is so well described in *Innocent: Abroad*:

"Ten dinners at 600 reis, 6,000 reis! Ruin and desolation."

"Twenty-five cigars, at 100 reis, 2,500 reis! Oh, my sainted mother!"

"Eleven bottles of wine, at 1,200 reis, 13,200 reis! Be with us all."

"Total, TWENTY-ONE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED REIS! The suffering Moses!—there ain't money enough in the ship to pay that bill! Go—leave me to my misery boys, I am a ruined community."

But when the bill was translated into a language that a Christian could understand it read as follows:

10 dinners 6,000 reis or	.....\$ 6.00
25 cigars, 2,500 reis or	.....\$ 2.50
11 bottles of wine, 13,200 reis or	\$13.20
Total 22,200 reis or	.....\$21.70



The party journeyed through France and Italy on their way to the Holy Land. Twain was much amused by the valiant attempts of the guides to speak "ze English" and the unconsciously amusing signs and notices in the French hotels,

"Notish—

"This hotel which is the best it is in Italy and most superb, is handsome locate on the best situation of the lake, with the most splendid view near the Villas Melzy, to the King of Belgian, and Serbelloni. This hotel have recently enlarge, do offer all commodities on moderate price, at the strangers gentlemen who wish spend the seasons on the Lake Come."

One of the travelers who greatly amused Mark Twain was Bloodgood H. Cutter nicknamed by the others "the poet Lariat" because he was always scribbling doggerel, writing it "on all possible subjects, and gets them printed on slips of paper, with his portrait at the head. These he will give to any man who comes along, whether he has anything against him or not."

One day someone said to him that it must be a great happiness to sit down at the close of day and outline the events that had happened, in rhyme and poetry like Byron and Shakespeare.

"Oh, yes it is—it is—" replied the Lariat, "Why, many's the time I've had to get up in the night when it comes on me:

" 'Whether we're on the sea or the land

We've all got to go at the word of command'—Hey! how's that?"

One old guide in Genoa took a tediously long time to explain how very, very old a particular mummy was. Clemens

waited as patiently as he could until he had finished, and then turned to him and asked calmly and deliberately:

"But tell me just one thing—is he dead? Is he any kin of yours?" Then it was the guide's turn to faint away.

In the same museum in Genoa, the guide showed Clemens two skulls, a large one and a small one; and wanted him to believe that the small one was that of Christopher Columbus as a boy, and the larger that of the same distinguished individual as a man. Not only did he ask Sam to so believe, but to go home and tell his friends all about it!

Twain pulled the guides' legs so often and gave them so much of their own medicine, that after a while when they saw him coming, they would run to get out of his way. Once a guide had to ask for Clemens at the hotel and, as he had forgotten his name because it was so foreign to him, he described the humorist as best he could:

"I want that great big American fool who is stopping here."

In Rome Clemens pretended to have discovered an old copy of the *Roman Daily Battle-Ax* which gave a contemporary eye-witness account of a gladiatorial combat:

"—— he was not thoroughly up in the backhanded stroke, but it was very gratifying to his numerous friends to know that in time, practice would have overcome this defect. However, he was killed. His sisters who were present, expressed considerable regret."

The guards of one country did not want to admit Clemens because they discovered large cakes of pink soap in his luggage, and mistook the humorist for a dangerous anarchist traveling with cakes of dynamite in his pocket! Clemens had an exceedingly difficult time explaining just

what soap was used for because they had never yet seen it in their lives.

Clemens was much impressed by what he saw in Pompeii:

"It was a quaint and curious pastime, wandering through this old silent city of the dead—lounging through utterly deserted streets where thousands and thousands of human beings once bought and sold, and walked and rode, and made the place resound with the noise and confusion of traffic and pleasure. They were not lazy. They hurried in those days. We had evidence of that. There was a temple on one corner, and it was a shorter cut to go between the columns of that temple from one street to the other than to go around—and behold, that pathway had been worn deep into the heavy flagstone of the floor by generations of time-saving feet! They would not go around when it was quicker to go through. We do that way in our cities."

When the party passed through Odessa, they stopped long enough to present an Address to the Emperor who happened to be visiting that seaport while making an inspection of his domain. The first paragraph of the petition read as follows:

"We, a handful of citizens of the United States, traveling for recreation—and unostentatiously, as becomes our unofficial state—have no excuse for presenting ourselves before your majesty, save a desire to offer our grateful acknowledgments to the Lord of a realm which, through good and through ill report, has been the steadfast friend of our Native Land."

There was much difficulty in recognizing the Emperor: for as one man appeared with a great deal of gold braid and

medals, Clemens felt sure that was he; but when a second man appeared with even more gold braid and more medals, he changed to the second man; and when a third appeared even more heavily decorated he felt sure that the third man was the Emperor,—and so it kept up for a long time, until at last the Emperor really did appear.

On the way back there was much excitement among the passengers in preparing relics and souvenirs to take home to their friends and relatives. Clemens came upon one fellow-passenger who was busy labeling the jaw-bone of an old ox, which he had picked up somewhere for a few cents, "Relic of a Russian general killed in battle."

"But that is not exactly truthful," expostulated Clemens.

"But my old aunt will never know the difference," returned the young man airily.

On shipboard Clemens became especially friendly with a young man by the name of Charlie Langdon who one day—as young men will—showed Clemens a miniature of his sister, Olivia Langdon of Elmira, New York. Clemens fell in love with the lovely face at first sight, and could scarcely wait to be introduced to her in the flesh.

As luck would have it, Mr. and Mrs. Langdon and their daughter met the ship at the dock, and Clemens found Olivia even lovelier than her picture. That first night of meeting they all went to hear Charles Dickens, who was on his second American tour, lecture. But Clemens paid much more attention, it is feared, to the lovely girl sitting beside him, than to the world famous author on the platform—striking as he was in his brightly colored theatrical clothes.

A little later Clemens was invited to visit the Langdons at Elmira. During that delightful week he was on the heights

of ecstasy and his courtship progressed rapidly. And when his visiting time had passed into the limbo of yesterday, he decided that it would be the death of him to leave Olivia so soon, and he hit upon a desperate scheme to prolong his stay. Blinded by irresistible love, he shamelessly bribed the colored coachman to loosen the seat of the spring wagon that would come to take him to the station. Immediately after breakfast he said goodbye to all the family who had clustered about the front door to bid him godspeed on his journey; threw his luggage in the wagon, hopped in himself, and the colored jehu whipped up the horses smartly. But the vehicle hadn't gone more than twenty yards down the driveway, with Sam and the left-behinds still waving to each other, when all of a sudden the seat gave way, and Sam was precipitated over backwards into the dusty road.

So "seriously" injured was Sam, that he had to be sent to bed, and the gentle Olivia was appointed his nurse. It need not be said that Sam was a patient slow to recover!

A few months later when Clemens proposed, Olivia told Sam that he would have to ask her father's consent—as was the quaint custom in those remote days when elopements and runaway marriages were the exception rather than the rule.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### MARRIAGE

CLEMENS waited upon Mr. Langdon who was an important and successful business man who took himself rather seriously and expected the world to do the same. After some pleasantries had been exchanged—though not about the weather we may be sure, for that was a subject which Clemens always scrupulously avoided—he casually asked:

"Mr. Langdon, have you noticed anything going on between me and your daughter?"

And when Mr. Langdon answered quite sharply, "No, Sir, I have not!" Clemens replied very nonchalantly:

"Well, look sharp, and you will."

A little later Mr. Langdon called Clemens into his study and said:

"Look here, I know you are a good fellow, and have a real sense of humor, but how do I know that you can support a wife?"

Clemens thought a moment, and then remarked, "Well, I can give references. I can refer you to Bill Gillis out West," and then he added half-aloud and half to himself:

"I have lied for that old fellow many a time, I guess he'll do it for me—once."

But then Mr. Langdon surprisingly said:

"Clemens, I don't need any references, I know you are the man for my daughter, and that you will make her happy." The wedding was planned for February 2, 1870, at Elmira.

Sam Clemens and Olivia Langdon were married by the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, a brother of Henry Ward Beecher. The wedding service was held at seven o'clock, because Mr. Beecher had to preside at a church service soon after the ceremony. There was a delicious wedding supper, followed by dancing, at which the bride's father danced with the bride. The bride was very beautiful, and one observer remembered that she wore the longest white gloves he had ever seen.

The day after the wedding the newly married couple left for Buffalo, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Langdon. Clemens understood that they were going to start their married life in a modest boarding house where he had engaged rooms. When they emerged from the Buffalo railway station they found a sleigh waiting to take them to their new home. And when the driver took them along the finest residential street in Buffalo, Clemens thought the man had made a mistake, and when he stopped in front of the finest house on the finest residential street he had no doubt the man had erred. For all the windows of the house were blazing, and servants were waiting at the door. The Langdons arrived in a sleigh right behind the Clemenses, and it was well they did, for Sam was just about to take Olivia away from the handsome house, knowing full well it could not contain the modest rooms he had engaged. But then it turned out that this beautiful dwelling, with furniture and servants complete, was Mr. Langdon's wedding gift to the newlyweds. When the fact of this princely wedding gift finally penetrated Clemens' head, he turned to Mr. Langdon and said:

"Thank you so much, Mr. Langdon, and whenever you are in Buffalo you can stop with us, and we won't charge you a cent of rent."

The coachman whom they found ready to receive their orders the next morning was Patrick McAleer who was

destined to remain in the Clemens employ until his death thirty-six years later. After his passing, Twain, in speaking at the Young Men's Christian Association in New York, recalled him as he had first seen him: a young Irishman "slender, tall, lithe, honest, truthful, and he never changed in all his life—In all the long years Patrick never made a mistake. He never needed an order; he never received a command. He knew. I have been asked for my idea of an ideal gentleman, and I give it to you—Patrick McAleer."

Shortly before his marriage Clemens had purchased a part interest in the *Buffalo Express* and was made one of the editors. When Clemens went to take possession of his office, a young man rather brusquely asked him whom he wanted to see. Clemens replied in his peculiar slow way of speaking:

"Well, yes, I should like to see some young man offer the new editor a chair."

Clemens solemnly promised his new readers that he would never swear in his columns—except when he was talking about high taxes and exorbitant landlords!

"Mark Twain Married and Settled," was the title of an article\* that appeared in the *Alta-California* for February 14, 1870: "By the last mail we received a delicate pink envelope containing still more delicate cards of a still more delicate pink, one bearing the words, 'Mr. & Mrs. S. L. Clemens, Delaware Avenue,' and the other, 'Olivia L. Langdon,' and a note announcing the marriage on the second of February in New York. So Mark and Miss Langdon have been made "Twains" according to the statute in such cases made and provided, and his host of friends will wish him joy at his good fortune, for the lady is spoken of as being beautiful,

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\* Discovered by the author in old files.



accomplished and amiable. And Mark has prospered financially, for his books yield him a handsome income, and his lecturing receipts should make any ordinary mortal happy.

"It seems Mark's father-in-law played an elaborate practical joke on him on the night of the wedding. The bride-groom, busy with his lectures, and not readily finding a house for sale, that suited his purse and taste, instructed Mr. Langdon's agent in Buffalo to secure him rooms and board in some nice family, where there would be but a few other boarders; and so the commission was executed. Mark could not learn the name of the family nor the street where they lived; and he privately determined to caution his father-in-law, as soon as admitted into the family, against continuing such a stupid agent in the management of his business. Finally a dozen particular friends escorted the bridal party from Elmira to Buffalo, in a palace car, and on arriving proposed to call on the newly married pair in the morning. By some more stupidity on the part of the agent, the bride and groom were the last to leave the car on account of being blocked in and when Mark reached his "boarding house," he found all his friends waiting for him in a magnificent mansion (\$40,000) elegantly furnished, stable, coach, horses, liveries for servants, check on the bank for a handsome amount—and all a present from his father-in-law. He said it only needed a drop curtain and a prompter to place the characters in position to make it like a scene in a sensational drama. In his letter he says: 'I have read those absurd fairy tales in my time, but I never, never, never, expected to be the hero of a romance in real life as unlooked for and unexpected as the wildest of them.' In the post script of his letter he says: 'In the good old fashioned fairy tale the hero would infallibly happen to notice an opal-hued mother of pearl box on the centre table and would heedlessly open it and find it a deed for the newly acquired property.

But bless you, I never have had any experience in playing the hero in a tale, and so no matter who shoved that box toward me, or hinted darkly at its contents, my calm, unruffled stupidity was victorious every time, and at last they had to shove the box under my nose in the most unromantic way and open it and display the deed and the insurance papers. All hands laughed at and abused me, but I told them it was all so new to me—tackle me again with another house, and see how I would sail through my part. The check on the bank, accompanying the gift, was not necessary, for my books and lecturing keep me equal to minor emergencies.' ”

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### BUFFALO

WHILE editor of the *Buffalo Express* Clemens' working costume was suited to comfort rather than show. After he had removed his coat, vest, collar and tie, he usually lounged in his editorial chair, cutting out exchange articles, writing editorials, and humorous skits. When he had extra hard work, he would remove even his shoes to make himself the more comfortable.

A fellow worker on the *Express* doubted if he ever enjoyed anything more than the jackknife engraving he did of a military map of the siege of Paris by the Germans, which appeared in the *Express* from Clemens' original plate with accompanying explanations and Clemens' delicious comments.

But Clemens was no good at political news and once he stated quite frankly in his columns:

"I do not know much about politics, and I am not sitting up nights to learn...."

But in his editorials about things in general Clemens did not mince matters. Of some Cohocton farmers who had taken the law into their own hands to drive away a couple of whom they did not approve for some reason, Clemens wrote:

"The men who did that deed are capable of doing any low, sneaking, cowardly villainy that could be invented in perdition...." After giving a full list of their names he asked:

"If the *farmers* of Cohocton are of this complexion, what on earth must a Cohocton *rough* be like?"

Clemens' fame was steadily increasing. An old friend taking a long horseback tour of Colorado wrote him:

"I stopped a week ago in a ranch hut a hundred miles from nowhere. The occupant had just two books, the Bible and *Innocents Abroad*—the former in good repair."

As his biographer, Albert Bigelow Paine, points out, Clemens on the *Express* was what he had been from the beginning of his life, the zealous champion of justice and liberty; often too obstreperous and unconventional, but never less than sincere. The very short time that he was on the *Express* earned him the reputation of being one of the most fearless and honest editors in the whole country.

In addition to his editing of the *Express*, Clemens conducted a humorous column in the *Galaxy Magazine* under the title of "Memoranda." One of his most notable contributions to this was a denunciation of the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage who had stated that he had a good Christian friend who, if he was in church and a workingman would enter, "would smell him instantly. My friend is not to blame for the sensitiveness of his nose, any more than you would flog a pointer for being keener on the scent than a stupid watchdog."

In a scathing and bitter denunciation, Clemens compared Talmadge to the Apostles Paul and Peter who "healed the very beggars, and held intercourse with people of a villainous odor every day," and who did not say, "Master, if thou art going to kill the church thus with bad smells I will have nothing to do with it——"

Some new people moved into the house next door to the Clemenses. Mark and his wife had been prevented by one

thing and another from paying the neighborly call that they would liked to have paid. But one morning Clemens happened to look over toward those neighbors and noticed that their house was afire. So he strolled over, and when his neighbor answered his ring, he said:

"Pardon me for calling at this inopportune time and interrupting your breakfast, but I thought I had better tell you without waiting—your house is on fire!"

All the spare time he had in Buffalo Clemens spent in writing the book which appeared in 1872 under the title of *Roughing It*. While he was busily engaged on the early chapters he wrote to his publishers that the *Innocents Abroad* would have to get up early to beat this new book!

But as the months went on Clemens found that he did not care so very much for the restrictions of an editorial position, easy as they were in his case. Furthermore he had decided to move to Hartford where his publishers were located, and where most of his literary friends had their homes. So in April, 1871, he disposed of his interest in the *Buffalo Express* at a loss of \$10,000. But he cared little for this loss, which would have financially crippled most young men, for his *Innocents Abroad*, which had appeared in 1869, was bringing him in thousands of dollars each month in royalties. Its popularity is indicated by the fact that in 1870, although the Mercantile Library of New York had over a hundred and twenty copies in circulation, there were thousands of names on the waiting list, anxious to peruse that inimitable travel book.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### HARTFORD

BEFORE he moved to Hartford Clemens did a certain amount of lecturing. One of his fellow lecturers was Josh Billings, who under 'rule seven' of an "Essai on Lekturing" said,

"Think of asking Mark Twain home with you, for instance. Yure good wife has put her house in apple-pie order for the ockashun; everything is just in the right place. Yu don't smoke in yure house, *never*. You don't put yure feet on the center-table, you don't skatter the nuzepapers all over the room in utter confushion: order and ekonemy governs yure premises. But if yu expeckt Mark Twain to be happy, or even kumfortable yu have got to buy a box of cigars worth at least seventeen dollars and yu hav got to move all the tender things out ov yure parlor. Yu hav got to skatter all the latest papers around the room careless, you hav got to hav a pitcher ov ice-water handy, for Mark is a dry humorist. Yu hav got to ketch and tie all yure yung ones, hed and foot, for Mark luvs babys only in theory; yu hav got to send yure favorite kat over to the nabors and hide yure poodle. These are things that hav to be done, or Mark will pak hiz valise with hiz extry shirt collar and hiz lektur on the Sandwich Islands, and travel around yure streets, smoking and reading the signs over the store doorways until lektur time begins."

A part of Mark's art was to begin his lectures very informally, and go on from one thing to another as though he was just making some chance preliminary remarks, and

then all of a sudden—so it seemed to the entranced audience—he would sit down. The audience would gasp—and look at their watches, and find much to their astonishment that Twain had been speaking for an hour and ten minutes. “And it hadn’t seemed even like five minutes!” they would exclaim to their friends afterwards.

The honor of choosing a name for *Roughing It* fell to Clemens’ publisher Frank Bliss. Twain had provisionally named it *Innocents at Home*, rather misleading—although, interesting to note, the title was retained for some of the English editions. Bliss was president of the American Publishing Co.

In 1872 the Clemenses moved into their fine new Hartford home which was built—unusual for those days—with the kitchen facing the street. Once a lady asked Twain why the kitchen was built in that location, and he answered:

“My cook is big and fat, and when she wants to see the circus go by, she can simply look out of the kitchen window, and not shake us all to death by running to a front window.”

One of the porches of this new house was built to resemble the Texas deck of a Mississippi river boat, so that whenever Clemens sat out on it, he would be reminded of those happy, carefree days on the river.

Clemens’ next-door neighbor was Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, the famous author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Once Mrs. Stowe was leaving for Florida, and Clemens ran over to say goodbye. When he got home again, his wife looked at him in great surprise and amazement:

“Why Youth (her nickname for him), you called on that famous lady, and forgot to wear your collar and tie!”

"That's right," returned Clemens feeling his neck. He rushed right upstairs and got his best collar and tie out of his drawer, and wrapped them up in a neat little bundle which he sent on to Mrs. Stowe with a note attached:

"Dear Mrs. Stowe, herewith receive a visit from the rest of me."

Some women might have been offended at this pleasantry, but Mrs. Stowe took it in high good humor and wrote back:

"A fine idea! An excellent idea! And if one must ever pay a personal visit, but lacks the time, why can't he simply send his hat and overcoat!"

Literary pirates were the bane of Clemens' life. One English publisher in particular bothered him to death. This man whose real name was Hotten (Clemens always called him Hottentot) brought out in London everything that Clemens published in America without giving him a cent of royalty. He even changed the titles of books, and brought out a volume of Twain's sketches and added some that the American had never written at all.

In 1872 Clemens sailed on the *Scotia* for England to try and arrange for English copyrights on his books. When he was sitting in the queer little English compartment of the train going from Liverpool to London, he noticed that an old gentleman sitting opposite to him was reading *Innocents Abroad*. Sam took out his watch and said to himself:

"Now I will time this old fellow and see how long and how often he laughs. It will give me a good idea of how the English appreciate American humor."

But as he read on, instead of laughing or even smiling, the old fellow's face became gloomier and gloomier until before he closed the book up, he seemed to be actually crying.



Sam felt that this presaged badly the reception that he would receive in England!

But he was to be most pleasantly surprised. When Longfellow, Holmes, and Lowell had gone over to England, the English were disappointed because they saw no difference between them and educated Englishmen, but Mark Twain was completely unique: his peculiar drawling speech, his long bushy hair, even this early in his life streaked with grey, and his quaint attitude towards so many things, attracted them at once.

Clemens wasn't in London long before he had met many famous people: Robert Browning, Charles Kingsley, Henry Irving and Stanley, the explorer who had just returned from finding Livingstone in the wilds of Africa. Clemens had first met Edward Stanley when the latter reported a lecture of his in St. Louis.

Once Clemens attended a club banquet. The custom at the club on such occasions was to read out the names of the distinguished guests one by one and then applaud them. Clemens was busy talking to the man next to him, and not bothering with the names as they were called. He did notice that one name received more applause than any of the others, so he joined in very heartily. When the applause had died down, Clemens asked whose name they had been applauding, and received the reply:

"Mark Twain!"

The pirate Hotten had expected his dishonest sales to jump up because of Twain's presence in London, but all his hopes were blasted by a letter which Twain wrote to the *Spectator* in which he presented the publisher in his true

colors and referred to him as "John Camden Hottentot." The fellow wrote a reply, but it was very ineffectual.

Clemens wrote several other letters—much stronger ones—but these he didn't send. It was his custom when very wrought up about something to write letters with a great deal of dynamite, but he usually ended by not sending them—though they served a useful purpose by relieving his pent-up feelings.

In one of these unsent letters which managed to survive among his papers, Clemens imagined that Hottentot was a rare specimen that he was going to offer to the zoological gardens, "——— I am sure that this singular little creature is the *missing link* between the man and the hyena."

Clemens intended to write a book on England and its people, and he had actually gathered a great deal of material for it, and written some chapters, but he could never bring himself to complete it because he had so many friends there and he didn't want to take any possible chance of offending them.

The first night that Clemens went out on the platform in London to give his lecture, there was a heavy fog throughout the city which had penetrated into the hall, so that when he began to speak he couldn't even see the front row of his audience. So he began by saying:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I can't see you, but I suppose that you are there!"

Clemens once attended the races near London. While there a fat friend rushed up to him and said:

"Mr. Clemens, I lost all my money on the wrong horse. Can you help me to get back to London?"

"Why," answered Clemens, "I just have money enough left for one ticket; but I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll hide you under the seat of my compartment."

After demurring somewhat to this novel scheme, the fat friend finally consented. They got in the compartment, and Clemens made his fat friend get down on his hands and knees, and then crawl underneath. He didn't quite fit, so he had to push him in with his foot, and then he dropped the curtain down. In due course the conductor came around, and right off Clemens handed the man *two* tickets. The conductor looked all around, rubbed his eyes and then asked:

"But where is the other fare?"

Whereupon Clemens tapped his head and replied in an airy way, "My friend is a bit dippy, he likes to ride under the seat."

One afternoon shortly after Sam's return from England the Clemenses were entertaining Charles Dudley Warner and his wife in their Hartford home. They had all been discussing a current novel, when Clemens said:

"The novel is mighty poor. If Warner and I were to collaborate, now, I bet we could write a much better novel." Their wives challenged them to do this, they took the challenge, and the result was *The Gilded Age*, 1874. Fenimore Cooper also wrote his first novel, *Precaution*, under a challenge from his wife.

*The Gilded Age* was written exceedingly rapidly: It was begun in February and finished by April. Most of the characters in Clemens' part of the book, which was the first half, reflected personalities of his boyhood: his uncle James Lampton became the immortal Colonel Sellers, Orion became Washington Sellers, John Marshall Clemens, Squire Hawkins, while Clemens' own personality in a greater or lesser degree is reflected in nearly all of his characters.

A few years later Clemens made his second trip to England, this time taking his family with him. When they were visiting Edinburgh Mrs. Clemens was taken ill, and the doctor whose services they secured turned out to be the famous author of *Rab and his Friends*, Dr. John Brown.

Dr. Brown and the Clemenses became fast friends. All during their stay of over a month in Edinburgh, Dr. Brown was their daily companion, and he often took Clemens with him when he made his professional calls, so that they could chat and see the city together.

Once Clemens and Dr. Brown were riding together when the latter, after looking at something on the street, sat back with a sigh. "What is the matter?" asked Clemens. "Does the doctor himself feel ill?"

"No," replied the great dog-lover, "but I just saw a dog over there whose name I do not know!"

In what high regard Dr. John Brown held Clemens is seen from the following, which the Doctor wrote a friend shortly before his death:

"Had the author of *The Innocents Abroad* not come to Edinburgh at that time we in all probability might never have met, and what a deprivation that would have been to me during the last quarter of a century!"

The chief character of the *Gilded Age* was Eschol Sellers, a name that Clemens had invented. Soon after the book had been issued, a well-to-do prosperous looking gentleman stepped into the office of the American Publishing Company at Hartford, and announced that his name was Eschol Sellers, that the book had brought a lot of ridicule upon him, and that his people wanted him to sue the authors for no less than ten thousand dollars,

There was only one thing to be done, and with Clemens' and Warner's consent, as many copies as possible were recalled and a new name given to the colonel, he being rechristened "Beriah Sellers." In dramatic versions, the name was again changed to "Mulberry Sellers."

To make the coincidence even more striking the real Eschol Sellers was an inventor and a promoter, though, of course, on a much more subdued scale, than the fictitious one. Sellers and Clemens had a number of talks together and the former mentioned that he was a descendant of the famous painter Rembrandt Peale.

Although Clemens wrote a greater number of books than most authors, no author planned more books that were never written than did he. About this time he planned collaborating with his friends, William Dean Howells and Thomas Bailey Aldrich, on a book to be called, *Twelve Memorable Murders*. But not even one of the twelve tales ever seems to have been written.

So many people wrote to Mark Twain asking his advice on their literary effusions that he prepared a form which, after stating that experience had taught him that it was not *wise* to criticize a piece of literature except to the *enemy* of the author, went on to say that "if you praise it that enemy admires you for your honest manliness, and if you dispraise it he admires you for your sound judgment."

*Tom Sawyer* was written at the author's study at Quarry Farm,\* which was some distance from the main house. He would go off by himself every morning after breakfast, remaining at his writing desk until dinner time without stopping for any lunch whatsoever. Other members of the family knew better than to venture near the place and if he was urgently needed at the big house, they blew a horn.

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\* The Clemens' summer place at Elmira, New York.

After dinner Clemens would read aloud to his family the chapters he had written that day. For he depended a great deal upon the advice and encouragement of his family. Mrs. Clemens and the girls often made changes which he immediately put into effect. He wrote on an average of fifty pages a day. He told a friend that he had been so wrapped up in the story and dead to everything else that he had fallen away behind in his letter writing.

It is interesting to note that *Tom Sawyer* was first written as a play, but as Clemens got further into the story, he made it into a novel. He tried writing parts of the book on a new-fangled machine called a typewriter, but after struggling with it for a while he sent it on to his friend, William Dean Howells, with a note attached:

"Dear Howells: I send you this machine as a gift, it can't hurt you because you haven't any morals anyway, but it makes me swear too much."

Twain's first appearance in the *Atlantic Monthly* for November, 1874, made him proud and happy. The article entitled, "A True Story, Repeated Word for Word as I Heard it," was exactly what it claimed to be. Aunt Rachel of the story was the Clemens' cook at Quarry Farm, her real name being Auntie Cord. She was a Virginia negress who had been sold twice as a slave, and was very proud of the fact that the second time she had fetched the whole of one thousand dollars on the block!

Clemens always took a keen delight in studying negro character. Two other negroes on the place, John Lewis and his wife, would often have violent theological arguments with Auntie Cord in the basement-kitchen. Theology always led to personality, and that led to epithets and the throwing of crockery, tinware, even dressed poultry which Auntie

Cord was preparing to roast. Nothing delighted Clemens more than to stand outside the window and listen to all the debates, and obtain invaluable material for future stories.

For a number of nights Clemens had been bothered by an old guinea hen who kept him awake. One night he could not go to sleep because of the dreadful racket the hen was making, so he got up and went after it with a stout stick. He chased it for three or four hours up and down, around and across the yard, but he never could get near enough to deal the creature a knock-out blow. The next morning in great disgust he gave orders to Lewis "to kill and eat that guinea-hen" which Lewis did with much alacrity. Clemens himself did not know the treat he was missing for he had never tasted guinea-hen. Years later when the delicious breast of guinea-hen was served him somewhere in Europe, he reflected ruefully, "To think that I chased that guinea for hours, and then was foolish enough to let Lewis eat it."

Rev. J. H. Twichell, and Clemens would go on many walking expeditions together. When they got tired of short walks around Hartford, they determined to walk all the way from Hartford to Boston—which they expected to make in twenty-four hours. It was eight o'clock of a November morning that they took off from Hartford. They did well the first day making no less than twenty-eight miles.

But the next morning they both awoke with a lameness, and after plodding only six miles they gave up. They had themselves driven to a railroad station where Clemens sent Howells a wire in Boston,

"We have made thirty-five miles in less than five days.

This demonstrates that the thing can be done. Shall now finish by rail. Did you have any bets on us?"

After Howells asked Clemens to write some more articles for the *Atlantic Monthly*, he could think of nothing to write, until one day he was describing his experiences on the river to his friend Twichell, who exclaimed,

"What a virgin subject to hurl into a magazine."

Thus many of the chapters of *Life on the Mississippi* appeared first in the *Atlantic Monthly* and attracted an immense amount of attention. But the book itself did not appear until seven years later as Clemens wanted the second half of the work to describe a revisit to the river, and he could not so manage his affairs to make the expedition for some years.

T. B. Aldrich, in an unsuspecting moment, once asked Clemens for his photograph. Clemens got together fifty-two and planned sending one each week for a year. But finding this too slow, he commenced sending one every day until Aldrich had to beg him to stop, "—— the police are in the habit of swooping down upon a publication of that sort."

They ceased for a while but the next New Year's some thirty pictures were delivered to Aldrich's house at once, of Mark Twain taken in every conceivable pose, his family, his house, his stable, and even the domestic animals.

Another time Aldrich and Clemens were playing billiards. While playing they became warm, and took off their coats. When they had completed the game they each put on the other's coat without realizing their mistake. A week or two later Clemens said to Lewis:

"My coat seems to have gotten awfully long all of a sudden, you better have the tailor shorten the sleeves."



About the same time Aldrich was complaining to his man that his coat sleeves had shrunk, and that he better have the tailor lengthen them. And when he donned his retailed coat, Clemens put his hand in his pocket and discovered a spectacle case that Aldrich had been looking everywhere for since the time they had played billiards. This made him look critically at the coat, and for the first time he realized the ridiculous mistake that he had made.

No matter if both coats were ruined, it afforded the friends many a hearty laugh!

The term now so common, *mental telepathy*, was coined by Mark Twain. From the time that he had foredreamed of his brother Henry's approaching death he had been very interested in the subject. One morning as he lay in bed he thought how excellent it would be if he could persuade his old friend, Dan De Quille, whom he had known in Virginia City, to write an account of the Nevada silver mines. He wrote the friend a letter, but *withheld* it until he could consult with a publisher. In about four days he noticed on the breakfast table, a letter from his friend De Quille whom he had not heard from for years. Before opening it, he told his family that he knew exactly what the letter contained. Sure enough when he read the contents, De Quille suggested doing exactly the same thing that Clemens was urging his friend to do in his *unposted* letter. Both men had had the inspiration at *exactly* the same time!

De Quille was immediately invited to spend the spring at Hartford which he did, and in Clemens' luxurious home, he wrote *The Big Bonanza*, a most fascinating account of western mining days, which Frank Bliss successfully published the following winter. Clemens was always inviting his old friends to visit him and stay as long as they cared.

He then would urge them to write, and forgetful of his own affairs, he was always ready to advise and encourage them, and when their work was completed, find a publisher. Two of those whom he so aided were Bret Harte and Joaquim Miller, both of whom he had known in the West.

After Clemens had finished *Tom Sawyer*, one of the greatest juveniles of all time, he was under a mistaken impression about it, as authors so often are, and wrote his friend Howells, "—— It is not a boy's book at all. It will be read only by adults. It is only written for adults."

After reading it over, Howells advised strongly that it should be treated explicitly as a boy's story, and that by so doing he would make it a book that both boys and grownups would enjoy immensely. Howells went on to say:

"I'd have that swearing out in an instant. I suppose I didn't notice it because the location was so familiar to my western sense, and so exactly the thing Huck would say, but it won't do for children."

Mrs. Clemens was the first to read this letter and she rushed into Sam's study with fire in her eyes, and asked him to explain what Howells meant by the swearing. Then he had to confess that when reading the work aloud to the family chapter by chapter, he had omitted the swear words! After telling Howells that nothing but the most inspired lying got him out of the scrape with his scalp, Clemens asked Howells:

"Does your wife give you 'rats,' like that, when you go a little one-sided?"

One of the most amusing things in Twain's *Sketches, New and Old*\* was the author's literal re-translation back into

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\* Published in 1875

English of Madame Blanc's French translation of the *Jumping Frog*. A typical sentence from this most amusing piece would be:

"Eh bien! I no saw that that frog had nothing of better than each frog;" after which Twain says parenthetically:

"If that isn't grammar gone to seed then I could myself no judge."

Another amusing thing that Clemens wrote about this time was "The Literary Nightmare." It tells how the following jingle took complete and entire possession of him, and went waltzing through his brain—no matter what he tried to do:

"Conductor, when you receive a fare,  
Punch in the presence of the passenjare!  
A blue trip slip for an eight-cent fare,  
A buff trip slip for a six-cent fare,  
A pink trip slip for a three-cent fare.  
Punch in the presence of the passenjare!"

Chorus

Punch, brother! Punch with care!  
Punch in the presence of the passenjare!"

Once some of Mark Twain's friends addressed a letter to him, "Mark Twain, God Knows Where." It found him and in his answer he said, "He *did*."

When he commenced *Huck Finn* Clemens did not care much for it and he wrote a friend,

"I like it only tolerably well, as far as I have gone, and may possibly pigeonhole or burn the manuscript when it is done."

One day Clemens happened upon a book by Charlotte M. Yonge that was called *The Prince and the Page* which fascinated him, and gave him the idea for *The Prince and the Pauper*. The Yonge book merely disguised a prince as a beggar, but Clemens decided also to disguise a beggar as a prince. He wished them each to learn the burdens of the other's daily existence. But in the working out of its details Clemens' book bears no resemblance to that of Yonge.

Clemens once received word that a suspicious looking character had been seen hanging around his home, and when he investigated he discovered that it was the beau of his house-girl who had been feeding the fellow surreptitiously. In the goodness of his heart Clemens said that he would be glad to set them up as a married couple. But when the young fellow showed a disinclination to live up to his promises, Clemens' dramatic instincts thought up a solution. After securing a marriage license, he hid the local police chief in one room and in the other his minister friend the Rev. Joseph Twichell. When the young man, after being reasoned with, still seemed reluctant to marry the girl, and said that even if he did decide, he would have to buy a license, Clemens dramatically opened the three doors, one disclosed the minister, one the girl, and the third the police chief—just in case there was any further hesitation. They were married and lived happily ever-afterwards. Later Clemens endeavored to make a story out of this incident, but it was never completely successful.

On December 17, 1877 Mark Twain made his famous speech at the Whittier Birthday dinner. He prepared what he thought was a most amusing speech portraying Whittier, Emerson, and Holmes as tramps calling upon an old miner named Longfellow who invited the three to come in and have a good stiff game of poker. The speech was very

funny and presented the four noted authors in a new and original manner. But the audience were agasp at such treatment of their sacred authors in so irreverent a manner, and received Twain's humorous discourse in stony silence.

Clemens' disappointment and chagrin were immense, and the next day he wrote letters of apology to the four authors. Some of the replies were unconsciously amusing. Miss Emerson, for instance, writing for her father, said that Ralph Waldo, far from playing cards, would not recognize a pack of cards if the obnoxious thing was presented to him. But such was the respect in which even Clemens held these authors that he brooded over his *faux pas* for many a day.

In 1879 Clemens made his first visit over to Germany. The Germans were delighted with the humorist who discovered that everyone from the Kaiser to his apartment janitor had been reading and chuckling over his most amusing essay entitled "How to Learn the German Language."

Apropos of learning the German language Twain wrote:

"Dreamed all bad foreigners went to German heaven; couldn't talk, and wished they had gone to the other place."\*

Clemens had intended taking a long walking tour with his friend, the Reverend Twichell, but whenever they were all ready to start, they heard that a train was just leaving in the direction they proposed to follow. And they would always end up by taking this, because they reasoned, there was no use in wasting perfectly good space on a perfectly good train! This trip resulted in *A Tramp Abroad*, 1880.

Clemens attended a great banquet given by the Grand Army of the Republic to General Grant. In addition to

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\* He also once remarked, "Now I know what eternity is meant for—to enable some to learn German."

Grant there were present Generals Sherman, Sheridan, Schofield, Pope, Logan, and several others. The evening seemed long because there were so many to speak, and Clemens' turn did not come until last of all, long after midnight. It was a most difficult time to speak because all were tired and hot and anxious to go home as quickly as possible.

After saying that there were some few millions of babies in the country that we would greatly honor if we only knew which ones they were, he became specific and said that "somewhere under the American flag, the future illustrious commander-in-chief of the United States army is so little burdened with his approaching grandeurs and responsibilities as to be giving his whole strategic mind to endeavoring to get his big toe into his mouth, an achievement which (meaning no disrespect) the illustrious guest of this evening also turned his attention to some fifty-six years ago."

And then his final sentence delivered, after a typical Twainian pause, brought down the roof with vociferous applause:

"And if the child is but the father of the man, there are mighty few who will doubt that he succeeded."

In writing to a friend Clemens gave the order in which he was held by his family:

"Jean, Mama, the cats Motley and Fraulein, and Papa." Clemens once told his little daughter Susy that if she was very good and was careful to feed her pet calf each day, it would turn into the pony that she was so anxious for, at the end of a year's time.

Mark Twain always took a deep interest in the colored race, and did his best by pen and word to secure them fair treatment. When Garfield was about to be inaugurated there was some talk that Frederick Douglass, the famous

negro, might lose his position as Marshal of the District of Columbia, so Clemens wrote a long letter to the President-elect in the course of which he said:

"I offer this petition with peculiar pleasure and strong desire, because I so honor this man's high and blemishless character, and so admire his brave, long crusade for the liberties and elevation of his race ——"

In 1881 Clemens started a movement to erect a monument to Adam. He felt that with so many monuments being erected everywhere throughout the country, the father of the human race deserved at least one. Clemens' idea was to have each person donate a dollar towards this worthy purpose. He even tried to have a congressman introduce a bill in the House of Representatives patenting the idea!

General Sherman and Mark Twain were fast friends. Once the General and he were traveling on the same train, and as soon as Clemens became aware of the fact that the General's private car was attached to the last regular car, he went in there and sat down. Pretending to be very angry, the General told the humorist that to ride in the private car he would either have to pay triple fare or else earn his way.

Every time the train stopped there would be crowds on the platforms calling for a few words. So Sherman on each occasion would take off his coat and military hat, put them on Clemens and say:

"Now, wherever the train stops you go out on the platform and represent me and make a speech."

That many congressmen did not impress Clemens as having a very high rate of intelligence, we know from how one of his papers commenced:

"Readers, suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself."

Clemens' home in Hartford was one of the very first private houses in the United States—if not the whole world—to have a telephone. When he was just starting his company, Alexander Graham Bell offered Clemens some stock at an exceedingly reasonable figure, but although he invested in every other harum-scarum scheme, Clemens turned down this which would have made him a millionaire in a few years!

Clemens, except for this one notable exception, was a susceptible person who invested in every crazy scheme, and, in a single year, 1881, he spent over one hundred thousand dollars. Not one dollar of this stupendous sum ever came back to him.

In 1882 Clemens revisited the Mississippi of which he was so fond. In fact he made a trip up the river with his good friend Captain Bixby all the way from New Orleans to Saint Louis. At this time Bixby had charge of a magnificent new Anchor Line steamboat. Bixby told friends afterwards that during the trip, Clemens was busy taking notes in a little book "just as he always did."

The humorist was invited by the Marquis of Lorne, then Governor General of Canada, to spend a few days at Ottawa. Clemens rode to the opening of Parliament in a carriage behind that of the Marquis, and when the salutes were fired, Clemens said to the Princess Louise, who was riding with him:

"Your Highness, I have other compliments paid me, but none equal to this one. I have never before had a salute fired in my honor."

Clemens' love for invention extended even to games. One day he spent eight hours in the sun with a yardstick,



measuring off the reigns from William the Conqueror till the present day, on the roads around his summer place. He gave each reign one foot of space to the year and had a stake mark the beginning of each reign. He felt that this would be an easy way for his little girls to learn history. He was wildly enthusiastic about this for some days, and then he dropped it in favor of some new invention.

George Washington Cable and Mark Twain often played jokes on each other. As the first of April, 1882, approached Cable determined to play a good joke on Mark Twain. He had a "private and confidential message" printed which stated that an April Fool joke was being played and that Twain's friends were urged to write asking for his autograph with a sentiment, so that all the letters would reach him on the first of April, and they must all be certain not to include any stamps or envelope for reply—as the purpose of the joke, of course, was to make the humorist as angry as possible. Every single friend that received Cable's circular, wrote, and the result was that an avalanche of letters descended upon the Clemens household—and Mrs. Clemens (who had been let into the secret) reported to the joke's perpetrator the effect which the various letters had upon their recipient.

That Clemens bore no ill will against the perpetrator of this joke we know from the fact that shortly after this he and Cable made a successful lecture tour together. At Rochester an incident happened which resulted in the writing of the *Connecticut Yankee*. When the two were browsing through a bookstore, Clemens picked up Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*.

"Cable, do you know anything about this book, the Arthurian legends of Sir Thomas Malory?"

"Mark, that is one of the most beautiful books in the world. Let me buy it for you. You will love it more than any book you ever read."

Clemens was more than delighted with the book, and as he read those quaint old legends, he began to contrast those days with modern times, and he soon found himself fancying what a picturesque thing it would be if a nineteenth century man would suddenly be placed in the environment of the sixth century. These cogitations resulted in the inimitable *Connecticut Yankee*, 1889.

*Huck Finn* made its first appearance in the *Century Magazine* for December, 1884. So the chapter that the public first became acquainted with was not the initial one, but the marvellous account of the Grangerford-Shepherdson Feud, one of the most vivid and unforgettable portions of the whole book. In the January number another chapter appeared in the same magazine, but the book itself did not reach the market until February, 1885, although it was officially published in December, 1884.

One day Clemens was calling upon his friend General Grant, and Grant remarked that he was writing his memoirs and that the Century Company would probably bring them out. When Clemens heard the amount that the company was going to pay the General in advance he felt that it was a ridiculously small sum to give for a work that would command such attention. Whereupon Clemens said that his publishing company, Charles L. Webster Company (Webster had married his niece) would be willing to pay him either twenty per cent of the list price or seventy per cent of the net return.

But Grant had scruples and said that the work should in fairness, go to the man who first suggested it. Clemens then pointed out that it ought to go to him because long before the Century Company had approached the Gen-

eral, he had urged and urged Grant to write his memoirs, and had said that if the General didn't want to be bothered with the publishing end of it, he would take all the trouble from his shoulders. The result was that Grant wrote his memoirs, finishing them just before his death, and that Webster and Co. brought them out, with a profit of over half a million dollars to the Grant family within a few months of publication—the largest sum that an American book had ever made up to that time.

After the publication of *Huck Finn*, Sam's writing was delayed somewhat while he devoted most of his time to the business of Charles L. Webster and Company and the promotion of the Paige type-setting machine. This was a new machine that was being invented by a certain James W. Paige whom Clemens knew and liked. Altogether Clemens, through many years, backed Paige to the tune of well over a hundred thousand dollars. But when the machine was at long last completed, and was being tried out before a group of interested millionaires, it failed only in one respect, but that a very important one—it failed to work.

One day, at the behest of Mrs. Clemens, Mark called up a lady friend to invite her to luncheon. But as he couldn't get the number for a long time, he completely lost his temper and began to rave to the operator. Suddenly he heard the lady's voice at the other end, and very much fearing that she had heard him losing his temper he said that he had just come to the telephone:

"George, our butler, was here before and I heard him swearing as I came up. I shall have to talk to him about it!"

One summer, Clemens took his three girls\* for a long promised trip down the river. The first night out,

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\* His only son Langdon died an infant in 1872.

when Clemens was sound asleep, he was awakened by his daughter Susy pulling at his bedclothes, and as soon as he sat up, Susy said mysteriously:

"Papa, they're calling you."

Clemens rushed out on deck expecting to find that something awful had happened. But it was only the leadsmen calling out the depth of the river. Susy, born and nurtured in far Eastern Hartford, was unacquainted with the river language which had given her father his name.

Clemens did not care for poetry as a rule, but he did fall under the spell of Robert Browning—to such an extent, in fact, that in Hartford he founded the first Browning Society. At the meeting the members were treated to beautiful readings from the poet's works in Clemens' sonorous and well-rounded voice. Browning's daughter-in-law, Mrs. Fannie Barrett Browning, told the author of this work that she and her husband often used to meet Mark Twain when both they and he were spending the winter in Florence, and that Barrett discovered that Clemens had a keener appreciation of his father's poetry than almost any man he had ever met!

A German class was also started at the Clemens home. Once a member and Clemens had a long argument over painting a house, in which they impersonated two German house painters. Clemens wrote the class a full length play called "Meisterschaft", which was written with a vocabulary of English and German. It was presented by the class on several occasions, and everyone declared it had fully achieved its two-fold purpose of instructing the actors and audience in German, and in giving them a great deal of fun and merriment.

Once Clemens received a letter from the English tax

office which said that he was subject to the English tax because so many of his books had been sold in that country. Whereupon he immediately sat down and wrote a most amusing letter to Queen Victoria. After saying that he had been embarrassed by hearing from a stranger, for he was a simple country boy, "and have always lived there, the early part in Marion County, Missouri, before the war, and this part in Hartford County, Connecticut, near Bloomfield and about eight miles this side of Farmington——"

He then told how he had once met the Prince of Wales who was leading a procession, while he himself was riding on top of a buss. This constituted an introduction because he was wearing a coat with very large pockets and buttons and it was certain that the Prince noticed him. Twain felt that he was not taxable because, when he referred to the section of the law that he was taxed under, he found only, "Trades, Officers, Gas Works."

He ended by saying that, not falling in any of these classes, he felt that he really was not subject at all to the British tax, and begged the Queen so to instruct her ministers.

While Robert Louis Stevenson was visiting New York Clemens called upon him at his hotel, and the writers spent much time in discussing books and men on the bench of a nearby park—for Stevenson's doctors had ordered him to stay out in the open air as much as possible. Stevenson told Clemens that he had recently given his father *Roughing It* to read, and that the old gentleman had laughed so heartily that he told his family that so much unaccustomed laughter must be bad for a man of his years.

Stevenson also told Mark that he insisted upon reading *Huck* aloud to a Frenchman who was doing his portrait, and

that the Frenchman had at first violently objected, but that in a day or two he would not begin to paint until Stevenson commenced reading.

The Clemenses and the Grover Clevelands were always the best of friends. Once Clemens and his wife were invited to a White House reception but Mrs. Clemens was ill, and could not go. Mrs. Clemens gave her husband a note for Mrs. Cleveland to sign. When Clemens reached the White House he presented the note, and said that Mrs. Cleveland must sign it so that he could send it right back to his wife. When Mrs. Cleveland demurred at signing a note she had not even read, Clemens said:

"Sign and I'll let you read it before sending it to Mrs. Clemens—for I myself don't know what is in the note."

Mrs. Cleveland duly signed the note, and upon reading it was much amused:

"This will certify that my husband did not wear his rubbers in the White House."

When the author of this book first heard of this anecdote he wondered if it was really true, so he wrote to Mrs. Cleveland (now Mrs. Preston of Princeton) for verification, and, after recalling the incident just as given above, she ended her letter by saying, "It was indeed a most amusing incident."

In 1888 Clemens, with a few friends, founded the famous Players Club, under the first Presidency of Edwin Booth who had the club incorporated, and who had purchased at his own expense the old brownstone residence at 16 Gramercy Place which has been occupied by the club ever since. Clemens became very fond of the Players and he often made the club his headquarters while visiting New York.

During the winter of 1888-9, Clemens followed with much interest the lecture tour which Bill Nye and James Whitcomb Riley made. At their first appearance in Boston Clemens introduced his friends as the Siamese Twins. He pretended that he had first met them when they had just been brought from Siam by Mr. Barnum. He went on to say that the ligature was their best hold then, but that later on their common interest in literature became their best hold, "when one of them committed an indiscretion, and they had to cut the old bond to accommodate the sheriff."

The famous lecture manager Maj. James Pond tried to get Clemens to join Nye and Riley in another lecture swing around the country, but much as the idea appealed to him he declined, because he was trying to give up lecturing for pay altogether. Yet when any worthy charity needed a boost, he was always ready to donate one of his inimitable talks.

In 1889 when Rudyard Kipling was making his tour around the world he stopped off to visit Mark Twain at Elmira, his summer home. Of this meeting between the two famous authors Mark Twain recollected:

"Kipling spent a couple of hours with me, and at the end of that time I had surprised him as much as he had surprised me and the honors were even. I believed that he knew more than any person I had ever met before, and I knew that he knew that I knew less than any person he had met before—though he did not say it, and I was not expecting that he would."

Another good friend of this period was the actor William Gillette. Once the actor and Clemens decided to give Elsie Leslie, whom they both admired so much, a sur-

prise. A unique surprise, indeed—for they determined to do nothing less than to embroider a pair of slippers for her, doing every bit of the work themselves! As the slippers were in process of being made, Clemens wrote a most amusing letter in which he said that Gillette was doing much better with his slipper, for no one would believe that he himself was making a slipper, declaring that it was a snow-shoe that had some kind of disease!

*The Prince and the Pauper* was produced at the Park Theatre on Christmas Eve, 1889. Although the play was well written, well staged, and splendidly acted it was not as great a success as it might have been since some of the finest scenes had to be omitted because the same actress was playing the part of Edward and Tom. Although Twain kept urging that another young actress be trained to play the part of one of the boys, there does not seem to have been any youthful actor available at the time. Evidently there were no forerunners of the Mauch twins in America at the time!

*A Connecticut Yankee*, which appeared in 1889, was illustrated by the famous Dan Beard. Mark had liked some illustrations Beard had done for *Cosmopolitan*, and saying "That's the man for me," had chosen Beard above numerous applicants, to illustrate the *Yankee*. So Beard called upon Clemens, who remarked that he didn't want to put him to any undue suffering, but he would be grateful if he did what many artists neglect to do before attempting to illustrate a book—read the book first. Beard replied that he had read the manuscript several times. Clemens made no attempt whatsoever to dictate to the artist, but wanted him to obey his own inspirations, and when he saw a picture in his mind to put that picture on paper, "be it humorous or be it serious,



I want his genius to be wholly unhampered. I shan't have any fears as to results."

It is interesting to note that Dan chose famous living people as models for his illustrations. Thus the supercilious young knight was modelled after the ex-Kaiser Wilhelm, the jovial Baron after the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) and the greedy, grasping merchant after one of the important American capitalists of the eighties; and although the author of this book has time and again urged Dan Beard, who is still hale and hearty (1938), to disclose the man's identity, he will not do so.

Beard told the author of this book that he found one tantalizing feature attendant upon his friendship with Mark Twain. No matter where they went together, Mark would always be the cynosure of all eyes. When they drove down Fifth Avenue in the Clemens carriage, for instance, everyone along the thoroughfare recognized the familiar features of the humorist with heavy mass of hair, bushy moustache, and white suit, and would stop and stare until the carriage was out of sight!

When the London publisher suggested that Twain soften the book a bit for the benefit of English readers he refused to do so, saying that he had already revised the *Yankee* twice, that Edmund Clarence Stedman had read it carefully, and that Mrs. Clemens had made him take out many passages, and soften others. He stoutly refused to change a single word, and if the publisher did not wish to agree, he would bring the book out at his own expense.

Clemens went on to tell the English publisher that the book was written primarily for English readers. So many

English had done their "sincerest best to teach us something for our betterment that it seems to me high time that some of us should substantially recognize the good intent by trying to pry up the English nation to a little higher level of manhood in turn."

Not a few Englishmen who were great admirers of Mark Twain refused to read this book because they felt it would cause them disappointment. To this group belonged Andrew Lang, who wrote:

"—— In the *Connecticut Yankee* Mark Twain is not, and cannot be, at the proper point of view. He has not the knowledge which would enable him to be a sound critic of the ideals of the Middle Ages. An Arthurian Knight in New York or in Washington, would find as much to blame, and justly, as a Yankee at Camelot."

In the early 'nineties when Clemens' arm and hand were crippled by rheumatism, he bought a phonograph at the suggestion of his friend William Dean Howells, and he talked into it, after which the cylinder was taken to a girl typist in the next room and correctly written out. Clemens tried the scheme for some time, but then gave it up. In fact he filled four dozen cylinders in two sittings, then found he could have done it a great deal easier with his pen—rheumatic stiffness notwithstanding—so he gave up the attempt to produce his books by dictation.

When Mark Twain was spending the winter in Berlin with his family, the Kaiser expressed a keen desire to meet him. A great dinner party was arranged by General Von Versen who knew the Emperor well and was related to Mark Twain by marriage. Before entering the banqueting hall, the Emperor determined not to do any talking—for

fear he might miss some of Twain's humorous sallies, and Twain himself had resolved to try and not do any talking because it had been stated in some book of etiquette he had read that in dining with kings and emperors, they must be allowed to do all the talking. The result was that neither the Kaiser nor Mark Twain spoke all during the meal: they were each waiting for the other to begin!

When the author was writing this book he communicated with the ex-Emperor in Holland who very kindly sent him his *Autobiography* with the incident described as above, and at the end of the account, "When you meet a humorist in real life he's usually disappointing."

But neither seemed to have realized why the other was such a dull table companion!

When Clemens got home from dining with the Emperor he noticed that the porter in his apartment house paid him unusual deference. At first he put it down to the fact that the patriotic fellow was merely honoring one whom his sovereign had honored. But it turned out that the porter had just discovered that Clemens was Mark Twain whose books he had enjoyed so tremendously. The next day he took Clemens into his room where pointing to a long row of German translations of Mark Twain's works, he said:

"There, you wrote them, I've found it out. Lieber Gott! I did not know it before, and I ask a million pardons." Then the man went on to tell Mark that of all his books he liked *Life on the Mississippi* the best. Which showed the keen judgment of the man—for it is one of Clemens' best.

When Mark was at Nauheim he met the British Ambassador to Germany who introduced the humorist to the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII). The meeting was a most cordial one, and the Prince took Clemens' arm and the

two marched up and down talking most earnestly together. At parting, the Prince said that it was a great pleasure to have met Clemens a second time. And when the humorist looked puzzled, Edward explained:

"Don't you remember that day on the Strand when you were on top of a bus and I was heading a procession and you had on your new overcoat with flap-pockets?"

A high compliment, indeed, for it showed that the Prince, had not only read "A Letter to the Queen of England" but had also remembered it.

After leaving Berlin the Clemens family rented the Villa Viviani on the outskirts of Florence. Here, in the peace and quietude of the Italian countryside, Clemens did considerable writing. He finished *Tom Sawyer Abroad* and *The One Million Pound Bank Note* and commenced and successfully concluded his *Joan of Arc*. The reader will recall how Clemens first became interested in the heroine when he found a page from a biography of her on a Hannibal street; and since that event he had been, consciously or unconsciously, preparing for his own book by reading every book on Joan that came his way.

*Joan of Arc* was published in 1896, anonymously because he did not want people to look for jokes in his account of the French maid, a book not meant to be humorous in any way. And the author's identity was not divulged until the book had been accepted on its own merits as a serious biography.

Unlike most of Twain's works, the material for *Joan of Arc* necessarily came from research. Twain once told the author's father that in the first two-thirds of the story he used one French and one English authority, while in the last third he had depended on five French, and an equal number of English, sources.

For many years after it was written, Mark liked *Joan* the best of all his books, but a year or two before his death, he realized that not it, but *Huckleberry Finn*, was his masterpiece, and best expressed his spirit.

*Joan of Arc* had been written extraordinarily quickly: one hundred thousand words in little more than a month—which is indeed rapid when it is remembered that all of the material had to be found through long research before it could be used in the book—and then it must be remembered that Clemens wrote everything in longhand!

On the ship returning to America there were a good many of Clemens' wealthy friends, and they determined to play a trick on him. At every opportunity they gave him boxes of expensive cigars which he accepted with profuse thanks. The plan was to watch Clemens be held for a stiff custom duty—a form of taxation which he particularly hated. By the time port was reached his friends had managed to give him a whole trunk load of cigars, and they lined up along the railing, to see the fun when the recipient was held up for a huge sum. But they were doomed to disappointment because as soon as the officials recognized Clemens they said:

"We have orders to extend to you the courtesies of the port. Go right through without examination."

Due to his very heavy investments in the type-setting machine, and the failure of Charles L. Webster and Company, practically all of Clemens' fortune was wiped out, and it was suggested that he declare himself bankrupt and only pay so many cents on the dollar of his debts. This Clemens resolutely refused to do, and in order to pay back all the money that he owed, he determined to make a lecture tour around the world.

For this valiant and successful attempt to pay all his debts to the last farthing, Clemens is often compared to Sir Walter Scott who did the same sort of thing near the end of his life. Plus the lectures in every country that he visited, Clemens wrote an account of his travels, and the result was his third travel book called, in America, *Following the Equator*, and in England *More Tramps Abroad*. The author of this book once saw in a French Encyclopedia these two titles listed as two separate works! The book appeared in 1897.

In India he traveled the length and breadth of the country—from Bombay to Allahabad, to Benares, to Calcutta and Darjeeling, to Lahore, Lucknow, to Delhi, and even to Jeypore—and in many places he lectured, and everywhere he was received as a conquering hero.

From India he went to Africa where he gave many lectures, and talked with thousands of interesting people, including President Kruger of the Orange Free State.

Mark Twain finally reached London where he took up quarters at Number Twenty-three Tedworth Square. At this time the author's father, James Ross Clemens, was studying medicine in London, and he read a report to the effect that Twain was stranded in the city without any funds. So he wrote saying that his modest purse was entirely at Twain's disposal. A few days later Mark called upon "Dr. Jim" as he soon nicknamed his cousin, and this was the beginning of a firm friendship which lasted until the elder Clemens' death in 1910.

When Dr. Jim became engaged in 1899, Mark Twain wrote to the bride-to-be that he had never married a Clemens himself, and should think twice before he ventured such a thing, "still less particular people have taken the risk and

found them well enough, as a change. I like my relative Jim very much, and as a Clemens he averages away up."

Lord Baden-Powell recalls that at a Fourth of July celebration in London Mark Twain "moved us almost to tears by saying that it was no occasion of rejoicing for him since it had caused the death of a dear relative, his uncle. He then proceeded to explain that this gentleman was wholeheartedly shouting out his enthusiasm when a sky rocket went down his throat. They poured water down to extinguish it but he died—not from the effects of the rocket but from the effect of water going down his throat—which was an entirely new experience for him."

One afternoon Basil Tozer met Mark Twain coming along Fleet Street looking terribly depressed.

"Mark," Tozer exclaimed, "what in the world is the matter with you? Have you had some great disappointment?"

"Sure I have," he answered at once. "I have read extracts from my books at some reception for over an hour in aid of some charity. The saloon was crowded, but as I came out afterwards with the audience the only remark I overheard came from one of your blasted Englishmen. He was talking to another Englishman and I heard him say,

"*'What a beastly American accent that man has!'*"

After his London winter, Clemens spent a delightful one in gay Vienna. A gentleman who was then a young newspaperman of eighteen has sent the author of this book some charming glimpses of the humorist in Vienna of 1898. All Vienna had succumbed to the humorist's charm. Mark was indeed the lion of the city. The ladies elbowed each other to get within the charmed circle. The more beautiful the ladies, the more quickly they surrounded Mark. As a matter of fact he probably did not know one lady from another. He enjoyed the smiles, the sparkle of

jewels, the beautiful gowns, and the glistening floors. He enjoyed being the lion of Vienna, much as Napoleon must have enjoyed being the lion of Paris.

The young man, whose name was C. E. Carpenter, was asked by Mark to show the latter an interview he had prepared for the *New York World*. But after Mark had cut out all the adjectives there was nothing left. The humorist told Carpenter that adjectives were valuable and should be conserved:

"When in doubt, strike the adjective out."

Before his departure from Vienna Mark Twain was received by the late Emperor Franz Joseph who was very anxious to make the acquaintance of the foreigner who was able to conquer the hearts of his beloved people in such a sweeping manner. It is said that the old ruler and elderly humorist (if Mark could ever have been correctly described as elderly) took an instant liking to each other.

While in Vienna Twain had undertaken to collaborate on a play with a Vienna dramatist named Siegmund Schlesinger; which was to be called "Die Goldgräberin," or "The Woman Gold-Miner". But since Schlesinger spoke very little English, and Mark was better at understanding German than speaking it, the idea, unfortunately, had to be abandoned!

When the Clemens family left Vienna, they were followed to the station by a great crowd who filled their compartment with fragrant flowers and lingered on the platform, waving and cheering and crying as the train pulled away. To this day they have not forgotten Mark Twain in Vienna—as the author of this work is aware from his own experience. God knows that the unhappy city has had need



of Twain's cheering humor these past twenty or thirty years.

Back in London in the summer of 1899, Clemens had his famous hat-experience. He attended a tea, at which many clergymen were present. This was nothing unusual because he liked the clergy and they liked him. But all the way back to his hotel he was having thoughts about choirs, and angels, and sermons, and did not know what was the matter. In fact he thought that an illness must be coming on. But when he reached home, he discovered that he had taken a clergyman's hat by mistake! Whereupon an awful thought struck him: "What silly thoughts must the poor clergyman be having with my hat on!"

Upon returning to America the family rented a house in New York, and Clemens was kept busy every minute presiding at banquets, giving after-dinner speeches, and a thousand and one things that encroach upon the time of a famous man. Interesting to note, the last speech he gave in 1900 was to introduce the English statesman, Winston Churchill,\* in which he told how fair-minded England and America had been for not demanding exorbitant indemnities for dead missionaries in China as Germany and France had done.

Mark wrote a friend that he had declined ten banquets for the same day, and that he had answered no less than thirty letters. But he ended by saying that his daughter Jean was learning to typewrite and that he was anxiously awaiting the day when she could begin to typewrite his letters!

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\* Mr. Churchill is now the English representative of the International Mark Twain Society.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### AMERICA'S FAVORITE AUTHOR

IN JUNE, 1902, Clemens went out to Missouri to receive the degree of LL.D. from the University of Missouri. About this time he had received a letter from an old school-mate of his in Hannibal which read "come out and visit with us before I become too old and deaf to hear you swear." This decided Clemens, and come West he did in the spring of 1902.

He first spent a happy week in Hannibal, and gave out the diplomas at the High School Graduation. Taking an armful of them, he much amused the graduates by saying:

"Take one. Pick out a good one. Don't take two, but be sure you get a good one."

Some of his boyhood friends were there to greet him, Laura Hawkins (Becky Thatcher), Helen Kercheval, John Briggs (Joe Harper), Will Pitts, and a few others—for the half-century interval since the frolicsome Tom Sawyer days had taken a heavy toll.

Sunday morning he was taken around to all the churches and Sunday-schools which had all been built long after his time; in each building he pretended to find the very seat where he had sat as a boy. This puzzled the good ministers and they did not know how to take him. Sunday afternoon, after being introduced by a Father McLoughlin, he addressed his fellow citizens on the old times. This dwelling on the old happy times affected him so that he broke down and wept as he neared the end of his speech.

At every stop between Hannibal and Columbia, the seat of the University of Missouri, there were crowds waiting to cheer the returning hero. And if the wait was long enough, he gave the people a little talk. On the fourth of June, 1902, Clemens came out on the platform to receive his honorary degree. When the citation was read out:

"America's foremost author and best-loved citizen, Samuel Langhorne Clemens," the humorist stood irresolute, and seemed to be in doubt whether to make a speech or merely express his thanks in a few brief words. But the audience answered for him, because suddenly the thousands present (the exercises were held out of doors) stood up as one man, remaining silent in tribute to the author. Then he gave his fellow Missourians a charming and delightful talk, and ended by telling his watermelon story.

This story dealt with the time that Sam as a boy stole a watermelon from a wagon while the driver was in a farmhouse making a sale. He took the melon to a quiet field, and plugged it, but found it bitter and green. Whereupon he said to himself, "Now what would George Washington do if he found himself under similar circumstances? Why, of course, he would take the melon back and make the man give him a better one." So in order to teach the man the proper way of acting, that is what young Sam did.

Clemens never knew he had so many relatives until he came to Missouri this time. No matter where he went, or what he did, people would rush up to him and enter into boresome and long-winded accounts of just how they were related to him. This became so tedious that once when he was having an early breakfast at Columbia the maid an-

nounced that some relatives had called to see him. Clemens simply remarked, "I can't help if they are related" and went right on with his breakfast.

On his return East, Clemens stopped at St. Louis for some days where he visited the author's father, James Ross Clemens. One of the first things he did in Saint Louis was to dedicate the house where Eugene Field was born in 1850. The next day someone told him that he had been made to dedicate the wrong house, as Field had actually been born elsewhere. He was not at all worried, but simply said,

"It makes no difference; a rose would smell as sweet under another name."

After launching a riverboat that was named the "Mark Twain" in his honor, he gave a delightful little talk in which he addressed the boat directly as though it had been a person, and said if she should be careful to follow her namesake's example, neither of them would ever need any fire insurance.

A grand reception was given him at the Saint Louis Club, which was attended by most of the elite of the city. Twain stood in a receiving line and everything went well until one old gentleman came along and as he shook hands with the humorist said: "Want to tell you how much I did enjoy *Tom Sawyer*." And when Twain gently pushed him forward to make way for the next person, the old man wouldn't budge, but went on to say, "I must tell you, Mr. Clemens, how much I enjoyed *Huckleberry Finn*." After Clemens had thanked him he thought the man would surely move on, but he stood his ground and said, "How can I tell you what pleasure *Innocents Abroad* gave me." And much to the surprise and consternation of Twain and everyone present, the fellow stood his ground and went through the entire gamut of

Twain's thirty odd works mentioning them all by name, and sometimes with an extra little comment or two. Since he was both elderly and a very prominent citizen, forceful measures could hardly have been exerted upon him, but Twain remarked afterwards that he never imagined that the recital of his books' names could possibly sound so terribly dull as when that old bore listed them, while he stood sweating profusely and moving from foot to foot.

When it became time for Twain to leave the city, the author's father sent old Jim Coale down to the station with Mark's ticket to check his trunk. But the old negro met some cronies who inveigled him into a saloon and when Mark Twain's party reached the station there was neither trunk nor ticket in evidence—nor Jim Coale. As Clemens, distracted about his trunk and railway ticket, paced up and down the platform, people rushed up to him to shake hands and say goodbye, but his thoughts were concentrated on his missing articles. The train was held over a few minutes out of courtesy to the great man, but when no Coale appeared, Doctor Jim had to buy another ticket for his cousin.

"I don't mind losing my clothes so much," commented Mark Twain as the train pulled out, "but the worst of it is that in the bottom of my trunk I had put the strictly extemporaneous and spontaneous speech that I am going to deliver in New York."

When Mrs. Clemens' final illness commenced in 1902, a visitor to the home found warnings in Mark Twain's handwriting put up everywhere about the house. In the trees opposite her bedroom window Mark had even put up notices to the birds not to sing too loudly.

On November 27th, 1902, Col. George Harvey, the President of Harper Brothers, gave a grand dinner in honor

of Twain's sixty-seventh birthday. Senator Thomas Brackett Reed gave, at this banquet, the last speech of his distinguished career—for he died a month or two afterwards. Others who spoke were Chauncey Depew, Hamilton Mabie, Henry Van Dyke, and John Kendrick Bangs. Clemens' speech that evening was noted for the beautiful tribute that he paid his wife: "—a part of me is not present; the larger part, the better part, is yonder at her home; that is my wife—"

Clemens' ears were always sympathetic to any suffering no matter where it took place. His friend Howells told him of the torturing to death of Private Edward Richter by orders of his officer on the night of February 7th, 1902. It seems that the victim was bound and gagged, and his mouth held forcibly open while water was slowly poured down his throat, a dipper full at a time. This was kept up for three hours until death mercifully came. For several days Clemens thought of nothing but this wanton cruelty, and he was so wrought up that when he tried to write an article he found it simply impossible to write aught that was printable. It was for this reason that such an article never came from his prolific and versatile pen.

A letter that Clemens wrote to Brander Matthews in 1903 was addressed and stamped but mislaid before being mailed. It was found some months after the humorist's death, and was received by Matthews in June, 1910—truly a message from the grave.

Once when he was laid up in bed, Clemens had a chance to read a good many of Walter Scott's works, and found nothing in them that he enjoyed—save possibly *Quentin Durward*. Some of the questions which he wrote his friend Brander Matthews after reading Scott were, "Are

there passages whose English is not poor and thin and commonplace?" "Has he any heroes and heroines who are not cads and cadesses?" "Has he funny characters that are funny, and humorous passages that are humorous?"

As the most popular American citizen, Mark Twain was even spoken of as a candidate for the presidency.

"Let us go outside the realm of practical politics next time in choosing our candidate for the Presidency." And the editorial concerning such a step went on to say that Twain, the greatest man of his day in private life, was "entitled to the fullest measure of recognition."

When a Society wanted to name itself "The Mark Twain Club," Clemens wrote back a delightfully humble and charming letter in which he stated that such compliments are proper and safe for the dead only,—“so long as we remain alive we are not safe from doing things which, however righteously and honorably intended, can wreck our reputations."

Clemens gave very few interviews and newspapers used every possible inducement to get them from him, offering as high as five hundred dollars for a two hour talk. A prominent New York journal wanted to pay him one hundred dollars a week for a several hour interview every Wednesday, during which time he would be permitted to discuss those topics that were uppermost in his mind.

But he declined each and every offer. He wrote one paper that his refusal wasn't based on the price—they offered plenty, but it was the nature of the work—a kind of work that he could not do well enough to satisfy himself. In addition to sensible offers and propositions, some papers wrote him some very foolish questions. One day he re-

ceived a wire from a well-known editor who asked him just two questions:

"Your favorite methods of escaping from Indians?"

"Your favorite method of escaping capture by the Indians when they were in pursuit of you?"

Among the greetings which came to Mark Twain before he left America in 1903 to spend the winter in Florence due to his wife's health, was one that Rudyard Kipling sent him through Frank Doubleday,

"I love to think of the great and godlike Clemens. He is the biggest man you have on your side of the water by a damn sight, and don't you forget it. Cervantes was a relation of his."

In May, 1904, Mrs. Clemens died in Florence, after thirty-four years of ideally-happy married life. To his close friend Rev. Joseph Twichell, who officiated at her funeral at Elmira, New York, after her body was brought to America, the bereaved husband wrote:

"How sweet she was in death, how young, how beautiful, how like her dear girlish self—In all that night and all that day she never noticed my caressing hand—it seemed strange."

After the passing of his wife Clemens took up residence in a rented house at Twenty-one Fifth Avenue, New York. Although he was not at all musical himself—when someone once asked him if he sang, he replied "Well, those who have heard me say I don't,"—he was very fond of listening to music, and he had an Orchestrelle installed in the house, replete with a wide variety of music for his different needs. Although he cared little for Wagner, he greatly delighted in Beethoven, Chopin, and Schubert's impromptus, and he loved to hear over and over again "Lorelei" and the "Erl-king."



The author's seventieth birthday was celebrated at a grand banquet given at Delmonico's which was attended by most of the literary celebrities of the United States. Many English authors who could not attend because of the distance, combined in sending a cable of congratulations: Anstey, Alfred Austin, Barrie, Bryce, Chesterton, Dobson, Conan Doyle, Gosse, Hardy, Hope, W. W. Jacobs, Kipling, Andrew Lang, Gilbert Parker, William Watson, and Israel Zangwill. This had never been done before for any American author.

Ever since he first became famous poor Clemens was bothered by audiences always expecting him to be humorous—no matter how solemn or serious the occasion. This was why he published *Joan of Arc* anonymously—as we have seen. Once he appeared at the graduating class of a girls' college to give the principal address. He came out on the platform and announced that he was going to read a serious poem instead of giving a talk. Whereupon the audience all burst out laughing. And when things had quieted down, he once again announced that he was going to read a serious poem, but this only caused the girls to laugh harder than ever. When he obtained quiet from the audience after some difficulty, he begged them to believe him that he was really in earnest and he wanted to read the serious poem. Then they simply raised the roof with their laughing, and pandemonium was let loose. Clemens finally had to leave the platform without being able to read his poem, and he berated the school in a very healthy fashion. The girls thought it was just another Mark Twain joke.

Since Mark Twain admired Jack London, what the latter's widow writes the author is interesting,

"The only personal recollections that I have of the in-

imitable Mark Twain, is my great excitement one night in New York some thirty years ago when I divided my attention between an exquisite performance of *Peter Pan*, and the contemplation of the back of Mark Twain's head! I think Maude Adams was playing the part of Peter. I also remember that I was rude enough to fill my eyes with his face and leonine, shaggy head as he came out.

"Jack and I were on our honeymoon. We were to have met Mr. Clemens during our sojourn in New York. Unfortunately we had arrived with dengue fever from the West Indies, and were forced to forego a number of tempting engagements. To our eternal regret as regards Mark Twain. It is a pleasure to learn that he who added so much grace of joyousness to the world and to our lives, admired Jack London."

When it was announced that the famous Russian author Maxim Gorky was coming over to the United States, Clemens interested himself in making the Russian's visit to this country a great success. When Gorky arrived, Clemens attended a small dinner in his honor, and introduced the latter to the guests. A grand dinner was planned, but suddenly a bomb burst: Gorky was put out of his hotel, for having brought to America, a woman not recognized by American law as his wife.

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

### AT THE HEIGHT OF HIS FAME

TWAIN once played a joke on Bishop Doane of Albany who at the time was rector of an Episcopal church in Hartford. After the service was completed Mark Twain said:

"Dr. Doane, I enjoyed your sermon this morning. I welcomed it like an old friend. I have, you know, a book at home containing every word of it."

"You have not," angrily replied Dr. Doane.

"I have so."

"Well, send that book to me. I'd like to see it."

The next day the rector received a dictionary from Mark Twain.

One of Frohman's early productions was an adaptation of Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper*. The two men became warm friends, although the producer found that the humorist had the fault, common to novelists, of insisting on having the conversation of his characters carried over bodily into the play, whether or not the conversation had any dramatic value. Another difficulty arose. It was found that the author had sold the dramatic rights to *The Prince and the Pauper* to two different men. The first buyer sued Frohman, and Frohman sued Twain, but this did not disturb their friendship. While the litigation raged, the plaintiff and defendant played billiards regularly at the Players' Club and at Mark Twain's home. Frohman lost in the lower court, won on appeal, but dropped the suit when Mark Twain's publishing house got into difficulties.

The best illustration of the value of brief speech reckoned in dollars was given by Mark Twain. His story was that when he had listened for five minutes to the preacher telling of the heathen, he wept, and was going to contribute fifty dollars, after ten minutes more of the sermon, he reduced the amount of his prospective contribution to twenty-five dollars, after half an hour more of eloquence, he cut the sum to five dollars. At the end of an hour of oratory, when the plate was passed, he stole two dollars.

Mark Twain while at his summer residence, prepared one evening to take a drive, and, expecting to remain out until late, he told the stable boy that he need not wait for him. He directed the fellow, however, to lock the stable when his work was done, and place the key under a stone, the location of which Mr. Clemens described with much exactness. When the humorist reached home after his drive he was surprised to find that the key was not in the place selected. When his patience had been exhausted, he woke the boy, who explained, as he started out to find the missing key:

"Mr. Clemens, I found a better place to hide it."

Whistler, the famous artist, once invited Mark Twain to visit his studio to see a new painting he had just completed. The humorist examined the canvass for some time in silence, then said, "I'd do away with that cloud if I were you," and extended his hand carelessly toward one corner of the picture as though about to smudge out a cloud effect. Whistler cried out nervously, "Gad, sir, be careful! Don't you see the paint is still wet!"

"Oh, that doesn't matter," said Mark. "I've got my gloves on."

Mr. Lyman Beecher Stowe recalls,

"When I graduated from Harvard in 1904 and went to New York City to seek my fortune the first man I met

on the street, whom I knew, was Mark Twain. I had known him since early childhood because my grandparents, Prof. Calvin Ellis Stowe and his wife, Harriet Beecher Stowe, had lived next door to the Clemens family in the famous Nook Farm Literary Colony of Hartford, Connecticut. As Mark Twain had expressed it, they were "friendly neighbors with no fences between."

"Mr. Clemens greeted me cordially and asked me what I was doing? I replied that I was looking for a job. "What kind of a job do you want?" he asked with his characteristic drawl. I replied that I hoped to find an editorial position. "Why don't I give you letters of introduction to some of the editors I know?" he asked. "That would be immensely kind of you and I certainly should appreciate it," I replied. "Well, I will," said he. "I'll send for you when they're ready."

"A few days later he sent for me to come to his house at 28 Fifth Avenue where he gave me what seemed like a bushel basket full of letters of introduction all written out in long hand. I had never seen as many before. I have never seen as many since. As he handed them to me he said, "Here they are my boy, take 'em an' peddle 'em 'round an' whatever you do, don't do your duty!"

"And that was the advice of the man who years before, when his publishing business failed, and his creditors offered to settle for fifty cents on the dollar, he replied, "I'm not a business man. Honor is a harder master than the law. It can only compromise for one hundred cents on the dollar and its debts never outlaw."

"Yes, no one knew better than he that duty and honor were exacting masters and inconsistent with a life of ease and pleasure."

Once a noted French visitor to the United States remarked that "Americans don't know who their grandfathers

are." Mark Twain countered by saying:

"Frenchmen don't know who their fathers are."

At a dinner at the Authors' Club, which then met in the Carnegie Hall Building, Mark Twain remarked to his friend Walter Russell that New York City was growing too full of people. They jostled him, said Twain, got in his way; forced him to change his natural gait in walking, and so broke the rhythm of his literary thoughts during a stroll. Although the Authors' Club was in a way a refuge from this, he wished for another, in the open. In planning a Mark Twain Park in New York City, far more crowded than at the time of Twain's remarks, the committees concerned are bent on creating and preserving just such a refuge as Twain must have had in mind.

We have all seen those scrapbooks with gummed pages—the kind that necessitates no pasting of entries. All that needs to be done is to moisten as much of the gummed page as is needed. Then the clipping, or whatever is to be placed in the book, is pressed to the moistened adhesive spot. It was Mark Twain who originated this idea.

It was Mark Twain who, when reading a story to a critic, never cared what he said. If the critic didn't move, he knew he had him. If he leaned a little forward he knew it was something good. But if the listener's foot began to twitch, he knew he would have to write it all over again.

Twain occupied a hotel room the walls of which were very thin. "The partitions were so thin," he remarked, "that one could hear a lady in the next room changing her mind!"

Although Mark Twain had the ability to make the whole world laugh uproariously, when it came to investing money

he was as helpless as a new-born babe. He threw away over two hundred thousand dollars in all sorts of inventions, such as steam generators, marine generators, marine telegraphs, and other marvelous machines that were going to revolutionize the printing industry. There was only one gadget that was too fantastic for Mark to invest in, and that was a queer sort of contraption called a telephone. He was offered a whole hatful of Bell Telephone stock but he turned it down with a snort—dismissed a proposition that would have made him untold millions. Instead he went into business with one of his relatives—and everyone knows what that means. He lost everything, to speak in the vernacular, except the kitchen stove.

His friend, H. H. Rogers of the Standard Oil Company, offered to pay his debts on the basis of fifty cents on the dollar, but Mark Twain would not hear of it. His admirers organized a national subscription, and checks came pouring in from all over the country; but Mark Twain returned every one of the contributions and insisted on paying his debts himself.

Mark Twain always used to declare that the most interesting letters he received were from people he did not know. He often inquired hopefully of his secretary:

"Any letters from strangers? If so I want to read them myself."

As the years went on, Twain was always amused by the reactions of "Mrs. Grundy" to *Tom Sawyer* and *Huck Finn*. Many a public library refused them admission. There are die-hard spots in New England where he is hardly known. As late as 1906 the library of a large city in the Middle West—of all places—ruled out *Tom Sawyer* as being deleterious to youthful morals.

Once Mark spoke of getting "dusted off" (lectured by Mrs. Clemens). His little daughter, Susy, took up the phrase and was always seeing to it that Mama did it before functions. "Mama, don't forget to dust him," she would say, or, "Did you dust Papa off?"

While he was in Melbourne Mark Twain met the artist, Mark Hambourg. They were friendly from the moment they met, and Mark made a point of attending Hambourg's concert. Mark arrived just as Hambourg was going upon the platform. The audience began to applaud politely, as they do when an artist first appears. Twain thought the applause was for himself; he was too busy looking for his seat to see Hambourg, and the audience had the interesting spectacle of two men both bowing and acknowledging the plaudits.

Mark Twain said that he always had a colored butler because he hated to give orders to a white man.

He often found mental relaxation in a sidewalk shoe-shine.

More than once Mark Twain wrote things which, in the development of later years, proved to be prophetic. As early as 1899 he had a vision of the radio programs such as are being presented today as a commonplace event:

"For sixty cents a week the telephone reads the morning paper to you at home; gives you the stocks and markets at noon; gives you lessons in three foreign languages during three hours; gives you the afternoon telegrams; and at night the concerts and operas. Of course, the clerks and seamstresses and bootblacks and everybody else are subscribers."

Mark Twain found smoking an aid to his composition. He would smoke an old cigar, enjoying a five-center



as much as a costly Havana. Often he would load up a big Calabash with strong Virginia tobacco and puff clouds of smoke while he penned page after page of his quaint humor.

Albert Bigelow Paine told Hamlin Garland that when he fully explained to Mark Twain that the fifty thousand dollars he lost in his publishing venture was not his partner's fault but his own, Twain answered in a reflective tone of voice,

"Albert, there was a time when my memory was reliable. There was a time when I could remember a great many things that were so and some that were *not* so—now I remember only the latter!"

Will Irwin recalls,

"Only once did I have a real talk with Mark Twain And I'm not likely to forget it. Once in 1906 or 1907 when I was editor of *McClure's* and also managing the bookhouse momentarily, we heard falsely that he was cutting loose from Harpers. Of course, we wanted him and I made an appointment to see him in his house on Lower Fifth Avenue. It was a hot midsummer day. I found him simply clad in a nightshirt with red edging. He was lying on the outside of a bed smoking a huge pipe and reading a yellowbacked French novel. Beside him on the table stood a glass of claret and seltzer with ice. He was certainly making himself comfortable. Our business didn't take more than two minutes. He had no intention of leaving Harper's and of course I didn't tease him. But in the course of my talk I'd mentioned that I'd burst only recently out of the Far West. That started him up. For an hour or two he drawled along, keeping me in convulsions, about Sandy Bowers and other characters in Nevada. I say "drawled" but that isn't the word for the pace and rhythm of Mark Twain's speech. He made a full stop between every two

words. It was the slowest speech I have ever heard. The tempo was part of the comic effect. He kept you waiting breathless for that final, unexpected word which carried the laugh. I remember only one of the stories he told me that day. It was about Sandy Bowers or perhaps some other old timer who struck it rich. He felt the need of foreign travel, and took ship in San Francisco for Honolulu. They had the customary pool on the ship's run; and of course, he bought on it. The ship ran 202 knots and the pool was awarded to someone who had guessed 204. Sandy (if it was he) protested with a roar. It wasn't fair, he said. He'd guessed nearer than that. He demanded that the stewards lay all the slips on the table. "There you are!" he yelled triumphantly. "That's my slip! Give me the money!"

"The slip read 2001!"

"When I was little, and already interested in literature, a schoolma'am of mine used to read us extracts from *Hiawatha* and the *Vision of Sir Launfal*, close the book and say: "Any one who cannot see the wide difference between real literature like this and cheap work like Mark Twain's will never develop taste!" I was trying to develop taste, God knows, and she used to worry me a lot. I liked Mark Twain. I preferred him to the *Vision of Sir Launfal*, in spite of my better nature. I was a long time getting over my inferiority complex. I didn't dare, really, to say what I felt until *Huckleberry Finn* came along. I've been waiting ever since for some American to beat *Huckleberry Finn*. It hasn't been done in my time and possibly it will never be done. *Huckleberry Finn* may be regarded, two centuries from now, as our *Don Quixote*. Immortal pieces of literature have often that history—from the people to the highbrows instead of from the highbrows to the people. Vide *Pilgrim's Progress* and, indeed, the Elizabethan plays including Shakespeare!"

## CHAPTER TWENTY

### AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO THE WORLD-AT-LARGE

MARK TWAIN was now by long odds the best known and most popular American. He had worked hard, traveled much, and now he wanted a rest. He told his friends that he was going to break his legs, so that he could not travel any more, rather than consent in a moment of weakness to go on another journey. But in 1907 all was changed when the University of Oxford notified him that they wished to bestow on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. He looked upon this as the crowning honor of his career, and said that he would go around the world six times to obtain that—if necessary.

Clemens sailed for England on the *Minneapolis*, and struck up a friendship with Archibald Henderson, Bernard Shaw's biographer, one of the most interesting men aboard. Henderson agreed to publish, after the author's death, a biography of Twain, dealing with his books from the sociological point of view. An entertainment was given for the benefit of the Seamen's Orphanage, and Twain's autographs were sold at auction. One of them brought as high as twenty-five dollars.

One day Clemens was drowsing out on his deck chair, and two little girls came up to him, and said:

"Pardon us, but are you Mr. Mark Twain?"

When Clemens admitted the identity, they smiled with delight and begged in unison:

"Well, then, Mr. Twain, won't you please be funny for us."

But Twain could think of nothing to do or say, and it was one of the few times in his long life when he was not equal to the occasion!

When he got off his train in the London station, he met Bernard Shaw who had come to welcome Henderson. The two men took to each other instantly and a few days later Shaw had Clemens to lunch. The conversation was mostly about Clemens' boyhood in Missouri and early days on the Mississippi in which the Englishman was intensely interested. When Mark Twain was leaving he presented Shaw with a copy of *Life on the Mississippi* with an inscription on the back of the cover.

"Pardon me, Mr. Clemens, but why do you inscribe the back of the cover, when most authors use the fly-leaf or the title page for that purpose."

To which, Shaw told the author of this book, Twain replied:

"I do that so that my autograph can't be torn out of the book, and sold separately."

A few days after his arrival Clemens attended the King's Garden Party at Windsor Castle. Although there were eighty-five hundred guests at the royal party, Mark Twain with his snow-white hair, ruddy countenance, sparkling blue eyes, and white suit, was much more the cynosure of all eyes than was the King himself.

The humorist and the monarch had a long friendly talk together in the course of which King Edward reminded the American of the pleasant chat and walk they had had together in Germany some fifteen years before. To emphasize

a point the King rested his hand upon Clemens' arm a moment or two, and when rain threatened and the temperature cooled, the Queen insisted upon Clemens putting on his hat.

A day or two later the newspapers reported that Twain kept his hat on while speaking to the King and Queen, and that he kept putting his hand continually on the King's shoulder to emphasize what he was saying. When Twain read these misstatements he pointed out that he was reared in the most exclusive circles of Missouri and that he knew how to behave. And he wore his hat while speaking to Her Majesty because she had twice commanded him to put on his hat:

"Mr. Clemens, put your hat on, I can't allow you to catch cold here."

A curious thing happened when he was visiting the home of Archdeacon Wilberforce a day or two later. When Clemens entered his host's drawing room, the clergyman told a man to whom he had been speaking:

"Mr. Pole, show Mr. Clemens what you have brought here."

Whereupon Mr. Pole unwrapped a package, and disclosed a curiously shaped silver vessel, exceedingly ancient in appearance, most beautifully and cunningly overlaid with some kind of green colored stone. When Clemens, with much interest, asked what it was, Wilberforce answered in a solemn voice, "It is the Holy Grail".

It seems that Mr. Pole had dreamed very vividly that if he would go to a certain spot and dig, he would find the Holy Grail. At first he had paid no attention, but when the dream had persisted, he had at last yielded, and sure enough upon digging he had discovered this strange saucer-shaped bowl which gave every indication of being extremely ancient.

Both Mr. Pole and the Archdeacon really believed that it was the Grail and Clemens never forgot the thrill of being in the same room with two men who held in their hands an object which they believed was the same vessel which had been brought by night and delivered to Nicodemus, over nineteen hundred years before, after the Creator of the Universe had delivered up His life on the cross for the redemption of the human race.

A little later Clemens was interested to read that through the backing of Archdeacon Wilberforce, a number of eminent clergymen and laymen were summoned to see and discuss the relic. Some fifty attended, including bishops, peers, the American Ambassador Whitelaw Reid, professors, and ministers of different denominations. "They heard Mr. Pole's story with deep attention," said the *New York Sun*, "but he could not prove the genuineness of the relic."

The Pilgrim Society gave Mark a glorious banquet at the Savoy Hotel. The late Augustine Birrell, whom the author of this book had the pleasure of knowing well, presided. Mr. Birrell's address of welcome closed with the following paragraph:

"Mark Twain is a man whom Englishmen and Americans do well to honor. He is a true consolidator of nations. His delightful humor is of the kind which dissipates and destroys national prejudices. His truth and his honor—his love of truth and his love of honor—overflow all boundaries. He has made the world better by his presence, and we rejoice to see him here. Long may he live to reap a plentiful harvest of hearty, honest, human affection."

The toast was drunk with all standing save the great writer. Clemens arose and made a speech which was ex-

ceedingly charming and humorous and graceful. After telling stories about his friends William Dean Howells and others, he told his audience how, on his arrival in England, he had been shocked to see printed on all the newspaper placards:

"Mark Twain Arrives: Ascot Cup Stolen."

While at another dinner a package was presented to him just as he got up to speak. He opened it to find a facsimile of the Ascot Cup which he held aloft as he read aloud the attached note:

"Dear Pard: I send you the cup to keep until the hue and cry dies down. People would suspect me, but they won't you because you have such an innocent look. As soon as everything gets quiet again we shall divide the booty.

Your old pard, Bill Sykes."

June 26th, 1907 was the great day when Clemens, along with Prince Arthur of Connaught, Prime Minister Campbell-Bannerman, Ambassador Whitelaw Reid, Auguste Rodin, Saint-Saens, and Rudyard Kipling, received his honorary degree. The candidates were led from Magdalen College by Lord Curzon, the Chancellor, clad in academic gowns, to the famous Sheldonian Theater. The degrees of Doctor of Law were first conferred. The author was not heckled by the gallery; but as Whitelaw Reid stepped forth a voice shouted, "Where's your Star-spangled Banner?" And they kept it up until General Booth was introduced as "The Passionate advocate of the dregs of the people, and General of the Salvation Army," when the people broke into tumultuous applause.

According to the *Daily News* this storm became a veritable cyclone when Mark Twain clad in his robe of scarlet and gray, was summoned forward to receive his honor. The

undergraduates in a frenzy of delight shouted such things as, "Have you brought the Jumping Frog with you?" "Where is the Ascot Cup?" "Where are the rest of the Innocents?" For a while so acute was the pandemonium that it seemed it would be impossible to present Mark at all, but finally by shouting at the top of his voice, Lord Curzon was able to make himself heard, and, while conferring the degree, said in an aside to Twain:

"Most amiable and charming sir, you shake the sides of the whole world with your merriment."

All the newly made alumni of Oxford University were the guests of Lord Curzon at All Souls for luncheon. As they left the theater to go to All Souls, the people who had lined the streets immediately spotted Mark Twain and formed a cheering bodyguard around him, thus escorting him to the college gates.

That afternoon at a garden party given at St. John's college, the guests seemed intent only upon one thing—upon having the honor of meeting Mark Twain.

The house where Clemens stayed in Oxford was continually besieged by men, women, and children who wanted a glimpse of the great humorist. At a luncheon which was given by Clemens' host, the manager of the catering establishment garbed himself as a waiter so that he might have the distinction of serving Clemens. Later he declared it to be the proudest moment of his whole life—and this despite the fact that he lived at Oxford where visiting celebrities were exceedingly common.

Clemens was much touched to hear of the hero-worship of this man and insisted upon going out in the kitchen to have a talk with him. He later declared that the man knew



fifteen or twenty times "as much about my books as I do myself."

As Mark Twain witnessed the Oxford pageant from a box with Rudyard Kipling and Curzon, someone passed up a folded slip of paper on which was written the words, "not true." Twain opened the paper and read Kipling's lines,

"East is East and West is West  
And never the *Twain* shall meet."

One of the London dinners that Clemens liked most was given him by the staff of *Punch*. That famous magazine had already honored him with a full page cartoon by Bernard Partridge. The cartoon showed the presiding genius of that paper, Mr. Punch, presenting the American with a glass of *punch* with the salutation, "Sir, I honor myself by drinking your health. Long life to you—and happiness—and perpetual youth."

Present at this gala occasion were Editor Agnew of *Punch*, Linley Sambourne, Francis Burnand, Henry Lucy, and the rest of the staff. The dinner was held in the historic dining room at Number Ten Bouverie Street where Thackeray, Douglas Jerrold, Augustus Sala, and many another of the great names associated with the famous journal had oft-times sat. Mark Twain was the first foreign visitor to sit at this historic board in over fifty years! During dinner the humorist received a charming surprise when Joy Agnew, the little daughter of the editor, presented him with the original drawing of Partridge's cartoon.

He went to Liverpool with T. P. O'Connor in the Prince of Wales' private coach which had been loaned for the occasion, to be guest of honor at the reception tendered by the Lord Mayor of Liverpool. So much had he been entertained

that he was too tired to be present while the courses were being served, but he appeared just in time to reply to the toast. T. P. O'Connor, just before his death, told the author of this book that at the Liverpool banquet Twain gave one of the finest talks of his whole career, and that no one who heard him, ever forgot his description of the stately *Begum of Bengal*, 142 days out from Canton—with her canvas towering into the sky, her decks and yards swarming with sailors, her hull burdened to the water line with a rich freightage of precious spices, lading the breezes with the gracious odors of the Orient. Mark Twain said that all the most kind compliments which the English had showered upon him made him feel like the stately *Begum*, but in his more somber moments, he knew he was more like the *Mary Ann* only fourteen hours out of Boston cargoed "with nothing to speak of."

Before leaving London, Clemens called on the Prime Minister. Lord Ponsonby writes the author,

"In 1907, when I was Private Secretary to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Prime Minister, Mark Twain came to the House of Commons to pay Sir Henry a visit. He was shown into my room and sat there while the Prime Minister was engaged. I apologized for keeping him waiting, and said I was sure he would understand that a Prime Minister always had a number of visitors. Mark Twain suggested going away, but I told him that Sir Henry would especially like to see him, having met him before. Mark Twain said,

" 'Yes, I think he will, because he knows that I have no axe to fry.'

"When finally he was shown into the Prime Minister's room the laughter that reached me through the door told me they were enjoying themselves hugely."

Whenever Mark needed a complete rest he loved nothing better than to go down to Bermuda, an island that he had first visited in the seventies.\* In the course of his life, he made half a dozen or more trips to that delightful region. During his first visit there he was standing in the lobby of the Hamilton Hotel, and an acquaintance asked him how he liked the change and rest.

"Well, I don't know," replied Twain "the bellboys have all my change, and the hotel the rest."

The vast quantities of fish in the water surrounding Bermuda greatly impressed Clemens. One day he saw a rat-trap which had been left full of fish by the receding tide.

"Well," he exclaimed, "there are so many fish in Bermuda, that even when you set a rat-trap you get nothing but those darn creatures."

The author of this book had to go to Bermuda to find out how Mark Twain did his shopping. The manager of Hamilton's principal store told him that when Mark Twain would enter, the sales-girls would rush up to him, and ask if they could serve him. But this bothered Clemens, and he told them that thereafter he wanted to shop his own way. This meant that he would go to one section of the store and pile up everything that he wanted in the center of the aisle, and then he would go to another section, and yet a third. As he would sail out of the store he would shout back:

"Send out to my place everything that is piled up."

After his first visit Clemens usually stayed with the Allen family. Mr. Allen told the author that Clemens always kept a battery of twenty or thirty *filled* pipes in his room so that while he was in the process of composition he could change from one pipe to another without stopping his work. He

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\* His first visit was made in 1877, with his friend Joseph Twichell.

was always particular about being shaved but when the barber arrived each morning the man couldn't see Clemens for the amount of pipe smoke that was in the room, and he had to call out and ask where he was. Then windows had to be opened, for unless the atmosphere became considerably clearer, the barber's razor would probably have taken off a slice of Clemens' ear or nose.

Mr. Allen told the author that he had a very difficult time in making Clemens go to bed at night. The humorist insisted upon staying up into the small hours of the morning. He was following his own advice, "Always stay up as long as anyone will let you." Since he arose so early, Mr. Allen was afraid that he would ruin his health by insufficient sleep.

In Bermuda Clemens got the most original description he had ever received in his whole life. A little girl saw him going down the street with his snow-white hair cut long, and his white suit the trousers of which were so baggy that they resembled a skirt, so she turned to her mother and asked:

"Mama, who is that woman-man passing the house?"

When Mark Twain was staying at Bay House, as the Allen's home was called, all the steamships would whistle when passing the promontory on which the house was situated—for all the captains knew Mark Twain.

As might be expected, the children on the island were crazy about Mark Twain. He would tell them all kinds of fascinating stories by the hour, and formed them into a club which he named "The Angel Fish Club." The rule was that the stories should always continue until the young people got tired.

Clemens' friend William Dean Howells was also exceedingly fond of Bermuda. When he rented a house there,

he insisted that several hens be installed in the chicken house before his arrival so that he could always have four fresh eggs for breakfast!

During one of his visits to Bay House, Clemens wrote his famous *The Turning Point in my Life*, a short story that friend Howells believed he never surpassed.

Finding his house on lower Fifth Avenue too noisy, Clemens went house hunting, and was shown a place at 14 West Tenth Street which he liked very much, and indicated that he would get it. But when the real estate agent called the next day to see about signing the lease, he discovered that the would-be tenant had disappeared from his hotel without leaving an address. Clemens' friend Frank M. Doubleday who had introduced him to the agent, was puzzled. Finally he struck on the bright idea of going to West Tenth Street. Sure enough, he found the Clemens family had moved in without so much as notifying the agent! Clemens had told the caretaker that the procedure was quite all right, and that functionary had overlooked notifying the real estate agent.

"Why, Mr. Clemens," exclaimed the agent, "don't you know you can't move into a house for which you have signed no lease?"

"Well," was the rejoinder, "I did move in, didn't I? Bring along your old lease, and I'll sign it."

This dwelling, off Fifth Avenue, soon became a Mecca for sightseers. Some admirers, through a mistake not uncommon, went to Ten West Fourteenth Street instead of to Fourteen West Tenth. The woman housekeeper there reported to police that there was a man in the neighborhood who was living under two names. He was calling himself Marcus Twain, but she had good reason to believe that his

real name was Clemens. The precinct commander, a Mark Twain fan, was able to assure her that using a literary alias was not criminal!

When Twain himself heard of it he was delighted,

"Thank the good Lord there is at least *one* woman in New York who does not know who I am."

Clemens was always fond of doing his reading and writing in bed, but he did so more and more in his last years. If they called any time before two o'clock in the afternoon his friends would find him surrounded with pillows on a bed strewn with manuscript. Frequently he dictated while reclining.

Clemens thought very highly of certain of his stories at the time of writing, but upon cooler reflection he discovered they were not really worth the publishing. One described a dream in which he found himself on the same train with the evangelist Sam Jones and the Archbishop of Canterbury. On the way Clemens noticed that the good bishop and he were not bound for the same destination, so while the prelate wasn't looking he changed the tickets in their hats with most explosive results. The author of this book has seen this story in manuscript and he has always regretted that Twain was dissuaded from publishing it.

As the years went by, Clemens became more and more passionately devoted to his favorite game of billiards. Once getting home after twelve o'clock with a friend the night of his seventy-third birthday dinner, he suggested a little game of billiards, and play they did until they heard the rattling of the milkman's cans, and discovered that it was close to five o'clock. And even then Mark was very reluctant to have his friend leave.

While Clemens was busy in New York City, speaking and presiding at dinners, the building of his new home at Redding, Connecticut, was proceeding under the competent direction of the very capable architect, John Howells, a son of William Dean Howells. Clemens told his daughter Clara that he did not want to see the house until it was completely built, all ready to move into, and kittens playing around—for Clemens always contended that no house was a home until it had kittens!

June 10, 1908, was the time fixed for Clemens to arrive at Redding on the afternoon train from New York. The news spread like wildfire, and all the inhabitants for miles and miles around turned out in carriages, buckboards, surreys and automobiles (then called 'gas buggies') which were all decorated with the flowers of the season. The express made a special stop to put Mark Twain and his belongings off at his new home.

That evening a great house-warming party was given for Twain by many of his friends who had come down from New York. Daniel Carter Beard who lived nearby told the author of this book how he and his friend Professor Lounsbury were outside in their work-clothes, sending off fire-rockets to add to the gaiety of the occasion. They didn't intend entering at all, but Twain spied them, and made them come in, and partake of the refreshments which were being served to ladies and gentlemen in evening clothes. Twain and the other guests all laughed good-naturedly at Beard's and Lounsbury's embarrassment.

A wonderful billiard room had been provided, of course, and when Clemens was missed a little later from the reception, and could be found nowhere, Beard shrewdly looked

in the billiard room, and discovered that the humorist had inveigled a number of old cronies into a game with him!

The house at first was called "Innocents at Home", but after a single winter spent there, which had brought a great deal of snow, and wind, and cold, Clemens changed the name to "Stormfield." New England weather on which he had written his famous essay years before, was acting true to form! The author has in his possession a photograph postal of the house which Twain gave his father, "Dr. Jim" after scratching out the printed name "Innocents at Home" and writing in "Stormfield."

This same year, 1908, he went to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to dedicate a monument to his friend Thomas Bailey Aldrich, who had died the year before. He recollected that when he was planning *Tom Sawyer* he heard that Aldrich was writing up his own boyhood in the book that became *The Story of a Bad Boy*. This made Twain think of giving up his own idea as he very modestly felt that Aldrich could do a much better job than he. But to his eternal credit Aldrich told Clemens this would be a most silly thing to do, as a Missouri boy would not conflict in the least degree with a New England one.

As he came down from the platform after speaking he was busy mopping his brow with his handkerchief—for it was an excessively warm day. To a friend who stood nearby he remarked,

"Poor Tom!" his voice quivering with sympathy. "Poor Tom! I hope—he isn't—as hot—as I am now."

Besides billiards Clemens was exceedingly fond of the card game of Hearts. And there was an unwritten law at Stormfield that all guests must play either billiards or Hearts.



If they openly scorned such good and honest pastimes, the chances were that no second invitation to Stormfield would come their way.

One night some guests who had not been invited at all came to Stormfield—two burglars—who after a hard chase were captured by Prof. Lounsbury and the sheriff. When Claude the butler had shot at them, Clemens had been awakened but went right to sleep again, thinking that Clara and some friends were opening champagne bottles!

Dan Beard told the author of this book that the next morning he took Clemens down to interview the burglars in the local lock-up. The office was a small, narrow room in a rather dilapidated frame building. The officers sat behind a deal table at one end of the room, while opposite was a dock where the prisoners were sitting wearing handcuffs. As Mark in his customary white flannel suit entered he stopped at the table occupied by the two young burglars, and Beard remembers him saying,

"So you're the two young men who called at my house in the middle of the night, and forgot to put your names in my guest-book?"

Although before Clemens' entrance the burglars had been very surly and had treated everyone with contempt, they answered the humorist with great respect and laughed at his comical remarks. Clemens proceeded to give them a lecture which ended thus, "—Don't you know where you're drifting? They'll send you from here to the Bridgeport jail, and the next thing you know you'll be in the United States Senate. There'll be no other future left open to you."

One of the visitors to Stormfield that gave Clemens the most pleasure was Laura Hawkins (the original Becky

Thatcher) now Mrs. Frazer and a grandmother, who came all the way from Hannibal to visit her childhood beau. The two old people had a glorious time re-telling each and every incident of that golden, blessed childhood passed on the banks of the Mississippi! Before Mrs. Frazer left Clemens gave her his photograph inscribed:

"To Laura Hawkins Frazer with the love of her earliest sweetheart. 'Mark Twain.' Oct. 14, 1908."

Another most welcome visitor was Helen Keller for whose marvelous achievement Mark had a profound admiration. Of this delightful friendship Miss Keller wrote the author:

"I met Mark Twain first at the home of Laurence Hutton when I was fourteen years old, and from that day until his death we were friends. I felt nearest to him during the few days I spent with him in the quiet of Stormfield. Whether we talked or sat by the fire or walked out under the snow-wreathed cedars surrounding the house, I caught unforgettable touch-pictures of his face that never laughed, but was full of tenderness whenever I read his lips."

"Mark Twain," continues Helen Keller to the author, "was the embodiment of a burning soul. His every gesture had sparkle, grace and distinction. He gave me a thrill—and a thrill is the most exquisite thing one can give another. I still feel the spell of his exciting personality after more than thirty years. When his name appears on a page under my hand, a quiver of expectancy runs through me. My fingers dash over the lines eager to read whatever there is about him.—

"The simplest fact, when his imagination touched it, glowed as full of meaning as a star is freighted with light.

Life and living interested him tremendously. He entered into my limited world with enthusiasm just as he might have explored Mars. Blindness was an adventure that kindled his curiosity. He treated me not as a freak but as a handicapped woman seeking a way to circumvent extraordinary difficulties. There was something of divine apprehension in this so rare naturalness towards those who differ from others in external circumstances."

In the late fall of 1909 Clemens took what was to be his final trip but one to Bermuda. Shortly before leaving for the island, he had given away his daughter Clara to the pianist Ossip Gabrilowitsch in a Stormfield wedding on October 16th, 1909. During this sojourn in Bermuda he feared that the triple curse of railroads, telegraphs, and newspapers would soon descend upon his island.

But the beauty that he had once described so vividly, "the breezy groves, the flower gardens, the coral caves, and the lovely vistas of blue water" did not now exert its magic spell upon him—for he was fatally stricken with angina pectoris. Yet he did obtain a certain surcease by going on many of the beautiful drives for which the island is so justly famous.

He came back in time for Christmas so that he could be with his daughter Jean now left alone since Clara's departure for a European honeymoon. But it was only to face the awful tragedy of her death from a fit of apoplexy while taking her bath. One of the saddest things connected with the sweet girl's sudden passing was the half-trimmed Christmas tree, surrounded by all the presents for the family and servants, that Jean had been working on the night she was fatally stricken. Everyone had been remembered. For



Florence, 1904



her father there was a great big globe—something that he long wanted, for Jean knew of her parent's constant interest in that most fascinating of subjects—geography.

During their last supper together, there had come from the press an inquiry about his health as a rumor had it that he was all but dead. So a few hours before her own death, Jean did her last secretarial task for her father by telephoning to the Associated Press the following message:

"I hear the newspapers say I am dying. The charge is not true. I would not do such a thing at my time of life. I am behaving as well as I can. Merry Christmas to everybody," and it was signed, "Mark Twain."

Clemens was too weak to accompany the body to Elmira, but he watched the funeral cortege leave Stormfield while his friend Albert Bigelow Paine played Jean's favorite piece on the organ—Schubert's *Impromptu*. He also requested Paine to play the *Intermezzo* in memory of Susy\*, and Handel's *Largo* for Mrs. Clemens.

He spent the next few days in writing out his beautiful essay on "The Death of Jean," in order to ease his mind. It was to be the last thing that he would write. On January 4th he started again for Bermuda, driving to the station in the old carriage which had been in the family since Sam and Olivia were married in 1870—forty odd years before.

For a while beneath the genial breezes of that southern island his health improved, and he even wrote to friend Paine to send his unabridged dictionary "that is on the table in my bedroom." But he became weaker and weaker until his friends the Allens wrote Paine that he had better come and take Clemens home. Mr. Allen had done everything possible to help the sick man, and he even had a special

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\* Clemens' oldest daughter, 1872-1896.

electric bell installed leading from Clemens' to his own room so that the sick man could summon assistance on an instant's notice.

During the voyage back he had great difficulty in breathing and Paine had to give him many hypodermic injections which Twain humorously called 'hypnotic injunctions', and begged Paine to excuse him for being such an unconscionably long time in dying! A little later he complained humorously that after a lifetime of public effort he had become nothing but a target for medicines.

Once he reached home, he rapidly failed, although he had lucid intervals in which he read a little of his old favorites, Suetonius and Carlyle. Another day he asked Clara to come up and sing for him some old Scotch airs which he had always delighted in so much.

Towards the very end Clemens lost his voice and he had to write his simple questions upon slips of paper. The very last writing that he did was a request for his spectacles and a glass of water.

During many years Clemens had predicted that since he had come in with Halley's comet he would go out with it. It had appeared in November, 1835, his birth month, and its next appearance was on April the 20th, 1910. And on the next day, April the 21st, Samuel Langhorne Clemens died.

"Good-bye" were the last words that Mark Twain spoke—whispered to his family and doctors who were clustered around his bedside. He passed on at half past six in the afternoon without the least sign of any struggle.

The funeral was held at the Presbyterian Brick Church on Fifth Avenue. What Dr. Henry Van Dyke, who officiated

at the funeral, wrote the author of this book about Twain's religion may fittingly be given here:

"No man can speak for another man's religion. It is a personal matter—deep, intimate, known only to God. Sometimes the man himself cannot define it or describe it. He does not talk about it. But it holds him. We know it is there by his conduct. The man who deals justly, loves mercy, and walks humbly with his God, is accepted even though he cannot define deity.

"Mark Twain was a man of that type. His honesty, his fidelity, his loving kindness to his neighbor, were fruits of faith—I will even say of Christian loyalty. No one who heard him speak with reverence of the simple faith of his dearly loved wife (as he often spoke to me) could think of him as being indifferent to religion. His sense of humor made him keenly aware of its perversions and literal misinterpretations. At these he mocked, even as Elijah, mocked at the priests of Baal (I Kings, XVIII). At times, perhaps, his high spirits carried this ridicule to an excess. But of genuine, simple Christian faith I never heard him speak without loving reverence.

"To say that 'Mark Twain lived and died an atheist' (if any rash writer has ventured the statement in a magazine article or elsewhere), is to misrepresent grossly the spiritual quality and moral conduct of the man. He felt 'the mystery of godliness' so much that to deny the existence of God would have seemed to him the height of impudent folly."

Tributes came from all the nation, and all the world. His death seemed to be as much of a personal loss to the boy in the little red schoolhouse as to the occupant of the White House, William Howard Taft, who only shortly before his own death wrote the author,

"Praising Mark Twain is like carrying coals to Newcastle; but I will say that, in my opinion, he was the greatest



writer of the last generation, and has brought more joy and happiness in my life than any other author. I cannot sufficiently express my debt to him."

The universality of Twain's appeal is seen in the following tributes sent to the author. John Galsworthy writes:

"I verily think that of all the books I ever read I have had more sheer enjoyment from that enchanting epic of youth *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*. They were the constant refreshment of my boyhood and have been of my manhood unto this day. For their sake and that of many another book, I cherish a loving memory of Mark Twain."

Meredith Nicholson, novelist and diplomat:

"Of three Americans at least—Franklin, Lincoln, Mark Twain—it may truly be said that they were indeed 'new birth of new soil.' No other country could have produced them. I first saw Mark Twain when he toured the country giving readings with George W. Cable. In those years we thought of him as a humorist, a writer with a genius for evoking mirth, not knowing that he would be recognized in his own time as philosopher and humanist as well as one of the shrewdest interpreters of life identified with any literature.

"If the Mississippi river was his university, his insatiable curiosity in all fields led him to post-graduate courses throughout the seven seas. It is not a negligible fact of his career that he was deeply interested in our varying political drama. He was, in the broadest sense, a democrat, fully sympathetic with all sane movements for clean government and for social betterment. Even as no one came before him he can have no successors, but remains unique among the world's immortals."

And the famous historian George Macaulay Trevelyan:  
"Mark Twain did more than any other man to make plain people in England understand plain people in America. That alone was a big work, and he did it, by the way, without setting out to do it. I shall never forget my first reading as a boy of *Huck Finn*. It was an entirely new world to me as an Englishman. Yet wholly lovable and familiar and understandable though a trifle strange as well. It was all I knew of America then, and so it was to thousands of English boys."

The genial author of *The Prisoner of Zenda*, Anthony Hope:

"I gladly join in the tribute to Mark Twain. I think that he is as much loved in England as in America. His humor and his humanity have an appeal which transcends the limit of locality or nationality—that, however, without any loss of its native American flavor."

# PART II

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

### MARK TWAIN AS A DRAMATIST

ONE is not apt to think of Mark Twain as a dramatist, yet he had many connections with the stage. When a small boy there was one story that he loved to hear, "The Golden Arm." It was a dramatic story of exceptional power told by an old family slave in Florida, Missouri, where the family would go from Hannibal, to spend the summers. The story dealt with a man whose wife had an arm of gold. In the course of time she died and was buried. Feeling the need of the gold, the widower went to the cemetery one night and recovered the golden arm. Thereafter he was continually haunted. Once, at midnight, a ghost, all in white, appeared to him and demanded: "Where's my golden arm? Where's my golden arm?"

When the humorist made his famous world lecture tour, he would always finish with this yarn of the "Golden Arm." The pause in the story had to be timed to the fraction of a second in order to realize its full value. No one knew better than Mark Twain the value of a pause!

When a lad, Clemens took a trip to Saint Louis and wrote a travel letter for a Keokuk paper under the name of Snodgrass. His description of the "Julius Cesar" makes amusing reading today:

"Pretty soon a little bell rang, and they rolled up the side of the house with Alexandria on it, showin a mighty

fine city, with houses, and streets, and sich, but nary a fire plug. Finally Mr. Cesar himself come in with a crown on, folks called it, but it looked to my unsophisticated vision like a hat without any crown about it. He had a talk with Antony during which he was uncommon severe on a Mr. Cashus (who was a standin' within three feet of him, but the derned fool didn't hear a word of it) reflectin on his personal appearance—

"Cashus and the other fellers was for killin' Cesar and makin' sausage meat of him 'cause they couldn't be kings and emperors while he was alive, but Brutus jist wanted to kill him like a christian, jist for the good of Rome."

In the fall of 1867 Bret Harte came East and paid a visit to Clemens in Hartford. The friends immediately began to collaborate on the play called "Ah Sin." This was a melodrama written expressly for the well-known impersonator of characters, Charles T. Parsloe. Harte had just sold a play which, although very successful, had advantaged him little, because the copyright had been sold outright. Hence he was now anxious to recoup himself.

Harte thought out the play while Clemens knocked the billiard balls about, but the latter always had to go over the work afterwards as Harte was weak at dialect. Both men worked so industriously that the play was soon finished, and was put on at the National Theatre in Washington, D. C., the night of May 7th, 1867. Extensive advertising and the fame of the authors brought out a capacity audience. Although a bad cold prevented Clemens from attending, Harte sat in a box and everybody around him observed how nervous he was until it was certain that the play was a success.

Parsloe impersonated the Chinese laundryman, an exciting part which included a supposed murder, a false accu-

sation, and many similar things. While by no means a great play, it was clever and contained numerous laughs.

At the end of each act Parsloe and the principal members of the company were called before the curtain for special acknowledgment. At the finish there was a general demand for Ah Sin, who caused much merriment by reading a message to Parsloe from Mark Twain to the effect that the writer was on the sick list and therefore could not come to Washington; but he had prepared two speeches—one to deliver in event of failure of the play, and the other if successful. "Please tell me which I shall send. May be better to put it to vote."

The house cheered the letter, and when it was put to the vote, decided unanimously that the evening was a grand success, with a capital "S", and so instructed Parsloe to order Clemens to wire immediately the speech for success.

Becoming interested in the play, Augustin Daly produced it at the old Fifth Avenue Theatre in New York, where the audience proved strangely apathetic. Even when taken on the road, "Ah Sin" turned out to be but a halting success.

Early in May, 1874, editor Joe Goodman, a California friend of Clemens, saw a play written by Gilbert S. Densmore presenting the character of Col. Mulberry Sellers, of *Gilded Age* fame, played by John T. Raymond. Clemens immediately wrote a vigorous letter of protest. An amiable settlement, however, was reached whereby Densmore agreed to turn over his version for a reasonable sum. Clemens forthwith commenced writing his own version, and enjoyed the work immensely.

It is now too late to determine just how much of Densmore's version found its way into Clemens'. It couldn't have been so very much, for the humorist worked hard at the play for over a month. Yet a controversy developed,

and in a letter to the *Hartford Post* Clemens declared that he did not think there were now twenty sentences of Mr. Densmore's in the play, but since he used so much of his plot he wrote and told him that he would pay Densmore about as much more as he had already paid him in case the play proved a success.

Charles Dudley Warner, who had collaborated in the writing of the *Gilded Age*, generously admitted that the play was based exclusively on Clemens' chapters of the novel and that therefore he (Warner) had no interest in it.

"The Almighty Dollar," as the authorized version was named, went down extremely well with the public. In fact it proved such a financial success that Clemens sent a representative with Raymond to assist him in the "division of the spoil." The agent had instructions to mail a card every few days, stating how much had been taken in at the box office the night before.

William Dean Howells remembered that one day when he was lunching with Clemens the latter was thrilled by the story that the cards told: one hundred—two hundred—three hundred dollars. This caused the dramatist to jump up from the table, fling his napkin down, and walk to and fro, exultant.

Some years later Clemens wanted to write another play on Col. Sellers—this time in collaboration with friend Howells. Col. Sellers in old age was to be more wildly extravagant than ever, with no end of new fantastic schemes. Howells came down to Hartford to spend a few weeks so it would be easier to work together. He wisely proposed that they alternate in writing the scenes of the play.

"We had loads and loads of fun about it, as it went along. We thought it mighty good, and called the play simply 'Col. Sellers,'" recollected Howells.

Sellers was imagined as a medium and temperance

reformer. One of the scenes depicted him trying to demonstrate in the presence of the audience how a man felt and acted who had fallen through drink. Letting his exuberant fancy run wild Clemens even had the idea of having the poor colonel wear a fire extinguisher strapped to his back so in any sudden emergency the old man could demonstrate its efficiency. In short, the play was Sellers caricatured, with most of the good and gentle side of the man left out. One far fetched conversation between Col. Sellers and Washington Hawkins, Howells insisted upon Clemens leaving out of the play as entirely too fanciful.

To whom the play should be offered? Wishing it given to the man who had made such a success of the first Col. Sellers play, Clemens wrote to Raymond. When, however, no answer was received, he communicated with a number of other actors who one and all refused. Raymond, it seems, had been in no hurry to answer because he was having a good season with a popular play. Yet at the end of the year he did take the play to read, suggesting after careful consideration that the materialization scene and the one about the English dukedom be omitted. Upon the author's refusing to do this, Raymond announced that he did not think "the thing worth his while." Finally in desperation the play was given to a ventriloquist named Burbank who received it enthusiastically. It was put on in Boston under the direction of no less a person than Daniel Frohman. The time before the first night Howells spent in an agony of suspense.

"Here's a play which every manager has put out of doors and which every actor known to us has refused. And now we go and do the most foolish thing of putting it on with a ventriloquist playing the chief part."

Burbank did better than the authors expected, but it did not last long even despite the life blown into it by Daniel Frohman—that would be asking too much.

At Hartford in the mid-eighties Clemens established a Browning Club where he delighted to read selections from the author of the *Ring and the Book*. He enjoyed the dramatic element in Browning more than anything else. Another interest was a German Club. Clemens was exhaustless in discovering all kinds of things to make the members learn German better. Once he and another member dressed up as house-painters and had a terrific argument in broken German as to who had spilt the imaginary paint bucket. Indefatigable Clemens even wrote a play for his class—half German and half English, called the "Meisterschaft," (i. e., Virtuosity). The class played it twice to extremely appreciative audiences. Students of German have told the author of this book that the play really does help one to learn the language.

The year 1889 was a memorable one, for it saw the publication of *The Prince and the Pauper*, of which Victoria Sackville-West recently said: "One who once loved the *Prince and the Pauper* to the extent of knowing pages of it by heart, is happy to pay tribute to its author now."

Writing the book was great fun! Every night Twain would read aloud to his family what he had done that day. He wrote to a friend that he took such pleasure in writing the *Prince and the Pauper* that he hated to hurry.

After a heavy lecture tour with George W. Cable, Clemens arrived home one Christmas Eve to find excitement and an air of deep mystery abroad. He knew that something was afoot, but did not guess what until he was taken over to his friend Charles Dudley Warner's house after supper. There he discovered that his Christmas present from the family was to be a play adaptation of the *Prince and the Pauper*, written by Mrs. Clemens and produced and acted by the children of the neighborhood.

When Susy Clemens, playing the part of the Prince,



said, "Fathers be alike, mayhap; mine hath not a doll's temper," someone tittered, and then the whole audience broke into laughter loud and long. In subsequent domestic performances of the play, the part of Miles Hendon was taken by Clemens himself. Little Susy wrote in her diary that although Papa had only three days in which to learn his lines they were all sure that he could do it. After the performance she made an entry to the effect that "Papa acted his part beautifully, and he added to the part making it a good deal longer. He was inexpressibly funny, with his great slouch hat and gait—oh, such a gait."

Twain thought it was a splendid thing that children should act in plays and he wrote a friend that if he had his life to live over again he would have a children's theatre, and "watch it, and work for it, and see it grow and blossom and bear its rich moral and intellectual fruitage—," and such work would give him "more pleasure and a saner and healthier profit" than anything else possibly could.

A few months later the "Prince" was adapted for the real stage by Abby Sage Richardson—Daniel Frohman being the director and the leading parts played by Elsie Leslie, who handled the double role of the Prince and Tom Canty.

Pretty Elsie Leslie—she was only in her 'teens—became a great favorite of the Clemens household. Possessed of a winning and attractive personality, she charmed all who saw or heard or met her. Invited to stay with the Clemens family for an extended visit, she became a boon companion of Jean, the youngest of the three Clemens girls.

Mention should be made of Twain's relations with Shakespeare. He firmly believed that Bacon wrote the plays usually assigned to Shakespeare. Once after attending a performance of "Romeo and Juliet" he remarked to his companion: "I think that is the best play that Bacon ever wrote."

Shortly before his death he became especially interested in the Baconian theory, from reading two books that made him more of a Baconian than ever, *The Shakespeare Problem Restated* by George Greenward, and *Some Characteristic Problems of Francis Bacon*, by William Stone Booth.

When someone asked Clemens if there was any evidence that Shakespeare didn't write the plays:

"There's plenty of evidence that he couldn't have," replied Mark Twain. "It required a man with the fullest legal temperament to have written them."

In 1909 appeared *Is Shakespeare Dead?* This extended essay was well received and helped to convince many. Powerfully written, it presented no new arguments, but made the facts of the case accessible to the general reader. Some have even gone so far as to suggest that Mark Twain wrote in favor of the Baconian theory with his tongue in his cheek, and that the book was really a most cleverly executed satire against the Baconians!

Be this as it may, during a visit to Boston Mark was a guest at a banquet of English scholars. The conversation drifted into a discussion of the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy. The party became divided in its opinion, and finally one desperate person turned to Mark Twain, who had not entered the discussion, and begged him to commit himself. Twain replied:

"I'll wait until I get to Heaven and ask Bacon if he didn't write the plays."

"I don't think, Mr. Clemens, that you will find Bacon in Heaven," replied the loyal Shakespearean.

"Then," replied Mark Twain, "you ask him!"

## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

### SOME FRIENDS OF MARK TWAIN.

"**W**AS Mark Twain always funny?" I asked Bill Gillis, his old mining partner who lived the last seventy-five years of his life just outside Angels Camp, California. We were sitting on a little screened-in porch and Mrs. Gillis was inside doing housework.

Old Gillis held up the stick he was whittling before he answered:

"You may be sure that Sam wasn't always funny. If he had been we would have kicked him out of the cabin as a darn nuisance. But when the proper occasion arose, he always had his joke."

After some more whittling, Gillis continued, "In that corner stood the bed where four of us would sleep. Clemens always insisted that he sleep on the outside so that the minute he woke up in the morning he could reach his pipe and tobacco. He was always smoking day and night, never had his pipe out of his mouth."

Gillis was present in the tavern when Ben Coon first told the famous Jumping Frog story. He remembers how everyone present went into gales and gales of laughter.

Another old friend of Mark Twain's that I knew was James Marvin. While a clerk in the old Allyn House in Hartford, he saw a good deal of the humorist who stopped at the hotel while his famous house on Farmington Avenue was being erected early in the seventies. Marvin was a hale and hearty old man of almost ninety when I met him. His eyes possessed the merriest twinkle ever seen in the eyes of any one, young or old. He told me that he was the prototype of

the Connecticut Yankee. After talking to him for a while one became firmly convinced that he spoke the truth. A Yankee he most certainly was, from ear to ear.

Clemens and Marvin used to stand out in front of the hotel and watch the people go by. Once they espied a very stout lady with a heavy bag in each hand, wending her way to the station. Saying aside to Marvin, "Here goes some fun," Clemens walked up to the old lady and stopping her, said:

"How is Uncle Ed and Aunt Mary?"

The woman looked at her questioner in a most surprised manner and answered:

"Excuse me, Sir, but you have the advantage of me; I have never seen you before."

"No, you have the advantage of me: I never saw you before, either," returned the unperturbed Twain.

And then, so Marvin tells me, the old lady was so taken with the humor and the divine effrontery of the man, that she was held spellbound by his talk for over an hour, forgetting all about her train. In the end both friends helped the old lady down to the station, each carrying a bag.

When Marvin called on Clemens to say goodbye before leaving for California, the humorist gave the most famous of all parting advice:

"Live so that when you come to die, even the undertaker will be sorry."

Mr. Walter Thompson heard Twain's maiden talk. This first lecture was entitled, "Our Fellow Savages, the Sandwich Islanders," and was repeated by Clemens with great success up and down the Pacific Coast. He would often introduce himself by saying:

"Mr. Clemens can't come tonight, but Mr. Mark Twain will take his place."

Clemens had many amusing experiences while he was lecturing in various mining camps. After one lecture in a town called "Red Dog" an old fellow came up to him and demanded,

"Be them your natural tones of eloquence?"

At another town where he lectured there was a rival performance, consisting of a woman tight-rope walker and her husband. The man came around to Clemens with the following interesting proposition:

"Look here. Let's combine our shows. I'll have my wife do the tight-rope act outside and draw a crowd, and you go inside and lecture."

Returning to Virginia City after lecturing at Gold Hill, Clemens and his lecture manager, Denis McCarthy, were held up by two outlaws, who called each other "Beauregard" and "Stonewall Jackson." While Mark was keeping up his hands he said to the outlaws:

"Don't flourish these pistols so promiscuously, they might go off by accident!"

When they told him to hand over his valuables, he said:

"How can I with my hands in the sky. My riches don't lie in heaven."

So the outlaws did the searching and whenever Clemens' hands showed signs of weakening, the men made him put them up again by giving him a poke in the ribs with a pistol. Then they gathered up the watches and money which Sam had made from his successful lecture, and departed with the final injunction that if Sam didn't continue to hold his hands up for fifteen minutes longer, they would come back and blow his head off.

The next day the story was all over Virginia City that Sam had been robbed on the Divide by two of his friends as a great joke, but everyone was careful not to be the one to

tell Sam that he had been taken in—for fear of his anger. But as people will, he found out all about it before the following evening, and went up to Joe Goodman who had engineered the joke:

"Joe, Sandy Baldwin told me *all about* that robbery. Now, Joe I have found out that the law doesn't recognize a joke, and I am going to send everyone of those fellows to the penitentiary."

In after years Joe remembered that he spent the hardest two hours of his entire life in dissuading Sam from carrying his threat into execution. But once his anger had sufficiently cooled down he forgave even Sandy Baldwin and Steve Gillis who had done the actual "robbing".

After a farewell lecture to the citizens of San Francisco Clemens sailed on the liner *America*, December 15, 1866, for New York. On this voyage Clemens met Captain Ned Wakeman, a big, burly, typical seaman, who, although he had never had a day of schooling in his whole life, knew the Bible by heart, and was certain that he was the only one who knew the secret of the Bible Miracles. He became the prototype of one of Twain's favorite characters, Captain Stormfield.

In those days the Isthmus had to be crossed partly by boat and partly by stagecoach and horseback. The tropical jungle made a profound impression upon Sam:

"Dark grottos, fairy festoons, tunnels, temples, columns, pillars, towers, pilasters, terraces, pyramids, mounds, walls, in endless confusion of vine-work—"

Clemens left Greytown, Nicaragua, and before they had been long at sea cholera was reported aboard. Within the next few days the passengers on the steamer *San Francisco*

died like flies, and in order to keep the dreaded disease from spreading the victims were thrown overboard a few minutes after their passing.

Medicine gave out, the ship was becalmed off Key West, and the passengers continued dying like flies. It was only as they neared New York and cool weather greeted them that the contagion was stopped. The last man died just before reaching New York, but his death was put down as "dropsy" so that the passengers would not be held in quarantine for months and months.

Altogether this was the most exciting voyage of Clemens' entire career and was described in letters to Walter Thompson.

Some months after reaching New York Clemens published his first book, May 1st, 1867, and the title was, *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County and other Sketches*. A few days later he gave his initial New York lecture in Cooper Union. When his manager saw that not many tickets were being purchased he donated thousands of tickets to the school children. Thus the lecture vastly increased Clemens' renown and prestige even though it did not make his pocket-book much bulkier!

During a stay in Hannibal the author tried to find people who might have personal memories of Mark Twain, but Mrs. Frazer was practically the only one. I shall never forget one amusing experience that I had, however. Word reached me at my hotel that an old woman who lived a long way out had memories of Clemens as a boy. An arduous trip over rough country roads put me before the farm house. The negro maid was reluctant to grant admittance at first, but after much explaining of my purpose I stood before a cross-looking old lady who was commencing to eat a huge bowl of salad. She stared at me in ill-disguised bad humor.

On my stating that I had called because she had known Mark Twain in her youth, she looked at me most scornfully and said very decidedly that she had not known him. She promptly became so sarcastic that at last I too became somewhat nettled.

"Have you ever HEARD of Mark Twain?" I asked.

To which she replied with condescension that would have been insulting were it not so amusing:

"Yes, we heard of him in these parts, but nothing any good." Which only goes to show that even a Mark Twain is not always a prophet in his own country!

Mr. Ray Stannard Baker, better known to millions of readers as David Grayson, met Mark Twain only once at a luncheon given for H. G. Wells—the expectant and triumphant Mark Twain: "I remember he came in a little late, in his white flannel clothing, his magnificent head thrown back, and all the party rising to greet him. I remember the expected drawling, humorous after-dinner talk; not anything that was said, but the essential impression it gave of assured acceptance, easy power, confident humor. It was Mark Twain giving a perfect and satisfactory presentation of Mark Twain. I delighted in it as one delights in fulfillment. It was the author as I expected him to be.

"I should probably have let this picture stand in my mind as a permanent representation of the creator of *Tom Sawyer* and *Huck Finn* if I had not one day got another and far more arresting glimpse of him. It was on Fifth Avenue in New York, in the square just above 23rd street. He was walking ahead of me, an unmistakable figure of distinction. At the corner he stopped and stood by the edge of the curbing, looking out across the restless, noisy, heedless crowds passing in the street. I slowed up to watch him there. I could see his face perfectly. It was a wholly different Mark Twain from the triumphant author of the Wells luncheon. Quite a



different man: somber, bleak-faced, certainly anything but humorous. I should have thought him by his look contemptuous, if not savage.

"It was the impression of a moment but it was vividly real and somehow it outlasted the early picture I had of him. I found it later in that bitter book, *What Is Man?* And I have wondered which was the real Mark Twain."

One summer my father received a letter from the humorist which suggested a boat trip:

"I have it all arranged: you will do the rowing, your wife the steering, and I the supervising."

Another time in asking my father about some medicine, he said, "You give me medical advice, Dr. Jim, and I'll give you all the literary advice that you want."

All readers of *Roughing It* will remember Robert Howland, the doughty sheriff of Aurora, who had only to fix an outlaw with his stern eye to make the fellow quail, and who sent that famous message to the Governor of Nevada:

"All is quiet in Aurora: in an hour six men will be hung!"

Not long since I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Robert Howland, the widow of Sheriff Bob. Not only did she have many recollections of her husband but while an unmarried girl living in Carson City she knew Mark Twain well. Once, as one of the most fascinating belles of Carson, she was asked by Clemens to go to a ball. She gladly accepted because handsome Sam Clemens was one of the most popular young men of the town. Girl-like, however, she did not tell any of her friends with whom she was going, wishing to make a surprise. The great night arrived and she waited, and waited, and waited, but no Sam Clemens called to take her to the ball. So also did twenty other girls wait. Each had been asked but all had kept it a secret, with the result that there were twenty-one girls disappointed. Simply another

Clemens hoax! Yet everything has its compensations! Although they missed the ball, they could boast to their grandchildren that they had been invited there by the great Mark Twain.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

### MARK TWAIN AND SMOKING

THE chief reason why Huckleberry Finn was so envied by the other boys was that he could smoke whenever he had the desire. How Tom used to envy Huck lolling the hot August afternoon away, so comfortable in his loose clothes and bare feet, and a deliciously fragrant pipe in his mouth. True it was but a crude hand-me-down corncob, but never throughout his whole lifetime were Clemens' nostrils to be again titillated by such a mellow fragrance.

If the Indians had taught the white man nothing else but the art of smoking we should be forever grateful to them. Many scores of old men have told me that if it were not for the satisfaction that smoking brought them they would want to die. There are many things which are hard to comprehend about the Puritans but the most difficult is their condemnation of smoking. The Dutch burghers had so much more a balanced view of life and they were intensely fond of smoking. Try as they might, the stern Fathers could not keep smoking out of New England any more than they could the sun or the stars. and try as they would to prevent it, smoking had soon become a universal custom.

Mark Twain always held that the greatest contribution of his native state to civilization was the "Missouri meer-schaum." To him it always represented the fresh fragrance of the cornfield, and he never looked upon the lines of black and yellow ingrained on the bowl by nature working through the warm suns and dews of Missouri but he felt that he was back in his boyhood once more, going through corn rows with

the grain ripening so fast that he would not have been surprised if at any minute the field burst into song.

In the following pages we shall give various incidents of Mark Twain's life which are all connected with his attitude towards smoking—usually corn-cob pipe smoking:

Early in his career while Clemens was on the Island of Hawaii, he made the acquaintance of a solemn Englishman named Howard, who was extremely proud of his family name, and with him paid a visit to the plantation of Judge Austin. As they rode in at the gates, the Judge came down to meet them, welcomed profusely the Englishman and the American, who was "deeply tanned and sporting a brown military moustache," saying:

"I am heartily glad to see you, Mr. Clemens. You would have been welcome in any case, as all strangers are, but with this letter from my old friend you are doubly welcome."

Clemens then said: "Judge Austin, I would like you to meet my friend, Mr. Brown."

At this Howard squirmed irascibly.

"My name is not Brown. It is Howard. Won't you please remember that?"

"Well, but the name 'Brown' is easier to remember," protested Clemens innocently.

Looking hard at Clemens and fancying he detected a roguish twinkle in the deep-set eyes, the Judge passed it off with, "Oh, well, what's in a name?" and led the way to the house. In walking up the drive, Clemens was much taken with the profusion of strange and beautiful flowers on every hand. The Judge recalled that as they approached the house Clemens, looking curiously at the unusual shape of the roof, took his sketchbook out, but, changing his mind, returned it to his pocket.

Judge Austin remembered that Clemens was an odd-looking figure and wore a linen coat much too large for him, which was always slipping down from one shoulder or the other.

Upon gaining the front porch the visitors were presented to the ladies, and were then shown to their rooms. A little later the supper-bell rang, and the guests were ushered into an imposing room with a lofty ceiling and tremendously large windows. Austin and his wife took their places, at either end of an immense koa-wood table sixty feet long and fully twenty wide.

From the moment they sat down, Clemens easily dominated the conversation, and kept the entire table convulsed with laughter. He told such amusing stories that Judge Austin, almost incapacitated by laughter, was forced to relegate the carving to a servant, while Mrs. Austin at her end of the table was in a like condition.

The sole exception to the general hilarity was Howard, who still smarted with resentment because the humorist kept calling him "Brown."

After the merry and all-too-soon-finished meal, the men retired for a smoke. Clemens went jauntily to Judge Austin and in a hail-fellow-well-met fashion slapped him on the back.

"Now, Judge, I want your largest pipe filled with your strongest tobacco!"

Judge Austin, a formal, dignified, punctilious gentleman of the old school, did not relish being accosted familiarly by fresh young men, so he determined to teach, then and there, the young puppy a lesson. A week or two previously the Judge had entertained a party of officers from a visiting American man-of-war, who at parting had presented their host with some extremely strong navy twist tobacco. Although a confirmed smoker, Austin found the navy twist

"one too many" for him. Filling the rankest pipe in his possession with this tobacco, he handed it to Clemens with a quizzical smile and no doubt with feelings as triumphant as ever Caesar Borgia had when handing poisoned wine to his guests. Instead of the anticipated exhibition of deep distress and anguish on the part of Clemens, the Judge was chagrined to find that the tobacco agreed uncommonly well with the young man, so much so that he smoked pipe after pipe of it, and kept the company far into the morning.

During his early reportorial days in Virginia City, Nevada, Mark Twain regarded his pipe, filled with villainous tobacco, as a salvation from bores; he took a ghastly delight in puffing away like a locomotive when an undesirable visitor dropped in, and eagerly watched the paleness which gradually crept over the face of the enemy as the poisonous stuff did its work.

One day while Mark was busily engaged in his work, with both feet plunged in manuscript, chair tilted back and notebook and pencil in hand, a tall, sallow-faced man, with a miserable expression on his countenance, and a deep consumptive cough, entered the room and without an invitation sat down.

Turning to the visitor Clemens said, "Well?"

The visitor said, "Well?"

"What can I do for you?" asked the humorist.

"Well, nothin' in particular. I heard 'em say you are the fellow who writes funny things, and as I have several hours to loaf around before the train comes, I thought I would drop around and get you to make me laugh a little."

Clemens scowled at the man, who, thinking the humorist was presenting him with a specimen of facial fun, began to titter.

"That'll do fust-rate, cap'n, but I'd rather hear you talk. I can make a mouth at a man about as easy as any

fellow you ever saw, but what I want is a few words from you that'll jolt me like a wagin had backed agin me."

"Won't you have a cigar?" asked Clemens, desirous of knowing whether or not this bore smoked.

"No, I never smoke a seegar."

William Montgomery Clemens, who relates this incident states that at this Mark Twain smiled and, taking up his pipe, filled it with the strongest tobacco he had and began to puff. "I'll keep him in here, now," mused the smoker, "until the old bore is as sick as a dog. I wouldn't consent to his departure, if he was to get down on his knees and pray for deliverance."

"Nothing does a man more good than a hearty laugh," the visitor said, coughing as a cloud of smoke surrounded his head. "Wah-hoo, wah-hoo! Don't you think it is a little close in here?"

"Oh, no," replied Mark, rising and locking the door, "there's plenty of air in here. How did you leave all the folks at home?"

"When I left home, Mur—that's my wife—said to me, says she, 'Now, say, while you are thar, don't smoke that cob pipe.' I wanted to follow her advice, but I put my—wah-hoo!—old fuzee in my jeans, an' now I b'l'ev I'll take a smoke."

The bore took out a cob pipe and a twist of new tobacco, known in his neighborhood as 'Tough Tom,' whittled off a handful, filled his pipe, lighted it, placed his feet on the stove and went to work. Mark soon began to snuff the foul air, but he was determined to stand it. The visitor blew smoke like a tar kiln. Mark grew restless. Beads of cold perspiration began to gather on his brow. Throwing down his pipe, he hastily unlocked the door and fled. On the sidewalk he met a friend.

"Hello, Clemens, what's the matter?"

Twain related what had occurred.

"Oh, you mean that fellow in brown jeans? You ought to have better sense than light your pipe in his presence."

"Why?" demanded Clemens, much puzzled.

"Because he is a member of the Arkansas Legislature!"

In June, 1907, Mark Twain went to England to receive the degree of Doctor of Literature given in recognition of his great contribution to letters. A number of English friends have very kindly sent me accounts of their final meeting with the great American.

Coulson Kernahan, the well-known writer and critic, had some charming relations with Clemens. One evening the American and he were dining together with Sir Bruce and Lady Seton at Durham House, Chelsea, and when the butler brought around a tray on which were some cigars and cigarettes, Mark Twain said:

"Say, Seton, do Lady Seton and you mind if I smoke a pipe?"

"Not in the least, my dear Clemens," was the reply, "I don't myself, as it happens, but I know that many smokers—Kernahan there, is one—are devoted to a pipe, and our friends can't please my wife—can they Nell?—and me better than by pleasing themselves. This is Liberty Hall."

Mark Twain's hand went to his trousers pocket, and brought out the contents, very much as one takes out the money one carries in order to select a needed six-pence or shilling. The contents proved to be, not as first appeared a handful of walnuts, but a number of stemless bowls of corn-cob pipes, to carry which, loose in his pocket, seemed as natural to him as it is to most of us to carry loose cash in a similar place. Then from a pocket on the other side, again as a matter of course, he hauled a corresponding number of



straight sticks or cane-like stems, one of which he fitted into a pipe-bowl, and passed to me

"Say, Ker'nan" (so he clipped the name) he asked, "did you ever smoke one of these? It's the coolest, lightest, sweetest, nuttiest, cutest thing in pipes that ever I struck. Throw a man a cigar with a sort of paper life-belt round it when he's in the deep waters of composing a funeral oration, but a brier is no bad sort of a buoy to hang on to when he's in danger of being carried under by a sticky tide of sentiment (no offense to your Scotch friend who wrote something about being "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush"). But when one wants to float, light and easy, to bask on one's back in the sun, and look out for anything there is of fun and humor in this old darned world of ours, you let him stick a corncob between his teeth, and he can't sink."

Kernahan told me that this was his first introduction to a corncob, and that he has the pipe still as a memento of the giver, not to smoke, for though once or twice he tried to smoke it the result invariably was a sore throat and dry tongue. The corncob, however, didn't seem to affect Mark Twain in the least, for he sucked at it the rest of the evening.

Sir Bruce Seton, who was by temperament a methodical man and ordered his days more or less by set rule, asked Mark Twain if he had any set rules with regard to smoking, particularly about doing so before breakfast, which a leading oculist had pronounced a frequent cause of eye trouble.

The answer which Mark Twain drawled out was delightful: "Why, yes, as I am a man of rules I make it a rule never to smoke more than one cigar at a time, my only other rule being never to smoke when I'm asleep, and never to leave off smoking when I'm awake."

Basil Tozer recalls:

"I can still see Mark Twain sitting in the Tuileries Gardens puffing clouds of smoke from his big pipe while he

recounted some of his varied experiences. We lived in the same hotel in those days of the mid-'nineties, the Hotel Brighton in rue de Rivoli, Paris, so that I had come to know him intimately. His speech was slow, as though he carefully weighed every word before uttering it, and what astonished me when I first made his acquaintance was that he seldom laughed and only rarely smiled. Instead his deep-set eyes under their bushy brows would twinkle in a most peculiar way when anyone said anything which stirred his sense of humor. I remember asking him if he thought a certain lady, whom we both knew, was married. "No," he answered at once, "I should say she is an extinct virgin." He had strong views on certain subjects, and acts of injustice or cruelty which he read about always lashed him into a frenzy. He was one of the kindest and most sympathetic of all the men I have met in a fairly long life."

Irving Bacheller always associated Mark Twain with smoking:

"I was a cheerful young man when I found myself an editor with the need to find something to edit. I had designed a little trading brig and was cruising under the lofty ramparts of literature. I tried to induce Dr. Holmes and John G. Whittier to allow me to practice on them. They would only contribute smiles and good wishes. Still that was a help. I had ripened a little when I went to Hartford to see Mark Twain. He sat smoking a pipe with his feet on a window sill, looking out upon a winter landscape while I put my plans before him.

"I don't need anyone to reject my stuff for me," he said. "I do it myself. Reams of it have gone into that fireplace. It burns well. I can say that for it. I haven't done a thing for weeks but feed the fire."

Like the young lady in a tale of Horatio Alger, he was polite but firm.

"I had better luck with Mr. Lowell and other authors. I got along. By and by I was the presiding officer of a hopeful coterie of good fellows known as the Lanthorne Club. In its membership were all the literary aspirations of Park Row. Stephen Crane, then writing for the Sunday papers, joined us. We had a curious little club-house in a section of William Street known as Monkey Hill. Howells, Eggleston, Stoddard, Alden, Gilder and Mark Twain came there to eat and to sit with us before its fireside.

"Mark came on my invitation and showered upon us the riches in his memory. The luncheon over he sat down before the fire, in a cushioned arm chair, with his feet on a stool, and with an ever-plentiful supply of hot Scotch and rich Cuban cigars on a tray beside him. With the atmosphere and the accessories favorable and his feet in the proper latitude, Mark Twain was at his best. Never with his feet on a platform or resting under a table. We had a season of story telling for the like of which I think that we would have need to go back to Rabelais and the *rire immense* at his round table. Was it the glad welcome and the flowing bowl that reminded him of going back on the old river, incognito, with a silk hat and fine top coat long after his career at the wheel had ended? The first story related to the thrilling lies of Rob Styles in the pilot house. What a perigee tide of humor! In all literature is there anything quite as droll as that chapter? It led to other curious adventures. They were all in the book but between these covers they lacked the color and the vivifying emphasis with which they now flowed from his lips embellished by the fluent, sonorous, affectionate profanity of the old West. He had lately returned from his long trip around the world. With the exquisite art of the true comedian he told of his amusing adventures in that tour, impersonating

the characters who had engaged his interest. In narration he had the priceless gift of vitalizing an important word so that its light grew in the checked flow of its syllables."

William Dana Orcutt tells about meeting Mark Twain in Florence:

As we seated ourselves on the terrace, the bantering continued. He had given me one of those terrible German cigars so common in Italy, at which I was tugging manfully.

"How do you like that cigar?" he demanded suddenly.

Etiquette seemed to require the concealment of my real sensations.

"It's fine," I prevaricated. "I didn't know one could get as good cigars as this over here. I've always felt it necessary to bring my own from the States."

Clemens' interest was at once aroused.

"Did you do so this year?" he inquired, with an innocence I should have suspected.

"Yes," I admitted; "but never again. From now on I'll smoke your kind when I come over."

He puffed away meditatively for a while. Then he asked, "Do you happen to have on your person any of the cigars you brought with you?"

I drew a case from my pocket, opened it, and offered him his selection. He threw away the cigar he had half smoked, leaned forward eagerly, and took one of mine. Lighting it quickly, he sank back in his chair and inhaled the smoke contentedly.

"That's a Hoyas de Monterey," he remarked at length. I haven't had one of those for a long time. Say, I've got an idea. You like my cigars and I like yours. Tell you what I'll do—I'll swap you even for those four!"

I was hoist by my own petard! We both laughed understandingly as I emptied my case.

Geraldine Farrar will always remember the warm affection Mark had for Lady Nicotine:

I came to know Mark Twain very slightly through the good offices of mutual friends as well as his daughter who about that time had become the wife of the well-known pianist, Mr. Ossip Gabrilowitsch.

In his roomy house on lower Fifth Avenue, Mr. Clemens gave a luncheon to several distinguished and professional women: among them, Kate Douglas Wiggin, who was, as well, a significant factor in my meeting with the beloved author.

Mr. Clemens presided at the feast, as he said:

"I'm a stag, mute before the congress of talent and grace of the 'doe.' "

The adjective describing his silence, however, was a bit far-fetched for he was in the most engaging humor, and by far the most voluble and eloquent of all present.

I still have the place-card from the table, drawn by a temperamental pen; the series of wild strokes by no means resembling the 'doe,' but bearing much more likeness to a small boy's idea of an embryonic 'porker.'

Mr. Clemens' inimitable drawl and easy manner drew us all to happy oblivion of time.

It was with a start we realized we had long overstayed the conventional hour.

I recall the relish with which he lighted a favorite pipe, extolling meanwhile the delights of Lady Nicotine.

As my dear father's indulgence was of the same nature, I could well appreciate the aromatic haze that slowly enveloped the snowy Clemens' thatch!

In such an easy pose, I cherish Mr. Clemens' photograph, happily inscribed as a memento of this delightful visit.

After his visit to Mark Twain, Kipling was convinced that a Missouri meerschaum was the finest and coolest smoke in the world:

"A big, darkened drawing room; a huge chair; a man with eyes, a mane of grizzled hair, a brown moustache covering a mouth as delicate as a woman's, a strong, square hand shaking mine, and the slowest, calmest, levellest voice in all the world, saying:

"Well, you think you owe me something, and you've come to tell me so. That's what I call squaring a debt handsomely."

"Piff!" from a cob-pipe (I always said that a Missouri meerschaum was the best smoking in the world), and, behold! Mark Twain had curled himself up in a big armchair, and I was smoking reverently, as befits one in the presence of his superior.

"The thing that struck me first was that he was an elderly man; yet, after a minute's thought, I perceived that it was otherwise, and in five minutes, the eyes looking at me, I saw that the grey hair was an accident of the most trivial. He was quite young. I was shaking his hand. I was smoking his cigar, and I was hearing him talk—this man I had learned to love and admire fourteen thousand miles away.

"Reading his books, I had striven to get an idea of his personality, and all my preconceived notions were wrong and beneath the reality. Blessed is the man who finds no disillusion when he is brought face to face with a revered writer. That was a moment to be remembered; the landing of a twelve-pound salmon was nothing to it. I had hooked Mark Twain, and he was treating me as though under certain circumstances I might be an equal."

Julian Hawthorne recollects:

"I went to see him once and was told that he was upstairs in bed; would I walk up? There he was propped

up by pillows, with a desk on his knees, writing. He was smoking, of course, one of those intolerable cheap cigars that none but he would wield. As we talked, the cigar went out; he borrowed a match from me, and then, hunting under the bedclothes, pulled out a dilapidated old boot, on the sole of which he scratched the match. Upon my inquiring into this, to me, extraordinary proceeding he explained that a fellow got in the habit of igniting matches in that way, and it seemed to him the natural thing to adopt this means of keeping up the good custom when in bed. As my call had not been anticipated, he couldn't have prepared the scene beforehand, even were he capable of such a subterfuge."

The following note was written to Twain's cousin, Dr. James Ross Clemens, from the charming house he rented at Dollis Hill, just on the outskirts of London:

"The bill for cigars came, but not the cigars. I have mislaid the bill. It was from the Juvenile Army and Navy Stores. Apparently those children don't know how to send anything anywhere except by letter-post. Please send me the name of the cigar—I can get it through Whitley or some other grown-up concern.

Yours ever,  
MARK."

In one of his letters to "Dr. Jim" Twain enclosed a post card which had been addressed to him with the following newspaper clipping pasted on the back:

"Washington, Mo., is the home of the 'Missouri Meer-schaum,' renowned the world over for its sweet smoke. Many years ago a woodturner, having plenty of time on his hands, created from a common corn-cob a pipe; two years ago he died a rich man. From his first lot of pipes, sold at the corner grocery, the manufacture has increased until today one house turns out 17,000,000 cob pipes annually. They go to every part of the globe."

On the margin of the post card Twain wrote:

"By the handwriting I see that Howells sent me this. He told me about this pipe several weeks ago. Is it true, Dr. Jim? Do you know the pipe?"

S. L. C."

The inimitable Don Marquis feels that Mark Twain retains his smoking and other habits in Heaven. God, interviewed by a reporter, happens to let out that Mark Twain has a river of his own in Heaven:

"It's an immense river, thousands of miles long—millions of miles long, in fact, when Mark Twain wants it that long; and he has steamboat races on it all the time. You never saw such a spectacle as one of Mark's steamboat races, with Mark on the deck of the winning ship, archangels, saints and devils lined up on the banks of the river shouting and cheering, the boats belching fire and smoke, and Mark making the welkin ring with profanity."

"Profanity?" The reporter was a little surprised.

"Listen," said Jehovah, "and get me right. Of course I have an objection to ordinary profanity. It's common and vulgar and undignified. It is, in a way, and if I ever wanted to take the matter up officially, an affront to *Me*. But Mark's profanity! It's different! It's a gorgeous lyric. Just to listen to it is a liberal education. When I found that a lot of angels and saints were going down to the bank of the river to listen to it, I was a little doubtful at first of its effect on them.

"Mark ran his river, with one of his most exciting races going on, right through the middle of Hell one time, and Satan turned blue with envy and admiration. He said that for pure style and interest it laid over anything he could invent. He came and begged Me to let him have Mark and his river for a while. I put it up to Mark, and he was all for going. But he didn't go, in the end."

"Why not?"



"His wife and William Dean Howells wouldn't let him," said Jehovah. "They said it would look bad. People don't understand."

Seumas McManus' delightful tribute follows,

"The man who can make a whole big nation shake its sides involuntarily, and joggle its lazy liver (and Twain did this to several big nations at once) is of the indispensable giants who keep greased the grinding axle of this old globe and make our world roll velvety, merrily. God, remember him where he is and give him a rocking-chair and big black cigar in the Saints' stall thus to multiply their Heavenly Happiness."

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

### DID MARK TWAIN SAY IT?

**I**T WOULD indeed be most surprising if no apocryphal sayings were attributed to Mark Twain. They have been in great number fathered upon Abraham Lincoln, Chauncy Depew, Will Rogers and, in fact, every famous story teller. All recall the celebrated "Lafayette, we are here," from the late War. Although General Pershing has categorically denied that he said it, it will doubtless always be attributed to him.

No one is erroneously reported dead in any of the four corners of the earth, but that a comparison is made with Mark Twain, and we are told that the person's death "was greatly exaggerated." That this was really said by Mark Twain is certain because my *own* father was the "dead man."

In the summer of 1897 Mark Twain and my father, Dr. James Ross Clemens (whom his kinsman nicknamed 'Dr. Jim') were both stopping at the Prince of Wales Hotel in London. When the latter was taken seriously ill with pneumonia Twain used to visit him each day. As not infrequently happens, the press was careless and confused the two Clemenses. Before long the news bulletins had it that Mark Twain was not only ill, but actually dead.

A large group of reporters called at Twain's apartments to learn the details of the funeral. When the door was flung back and Mark Twain in his white suit stood before them smoking his Missouri corncob pipe, the reporters collapsed in surprise and astonishment.

The humorist's eagle, all-observant eye noticed that one young reporter was terribly disappointed at missing what had

promised to be a great scoop. So he kindly took pity on the neophyte and told him to cable to his paper the following message:

"The report of Mark Twain's death is GREATLY EXAGGERATED."

As quickly as the cables and wires of the late nineties would allow, this saying was flashed around the world.

In commenting upon the incident in after years Twain would always end his account by saying in his slow, inimitable, dry drawl:

"But even my cousin, Dr. Jim, escaped death—doubtless by some chicanery of the tribe of Clemens."

When the weather is at all uncertain nine out of ten speakers will commence with the words: "As Mark Twain says, everybody complains about the weather but nobody does anything about it—." So well known is it in fact that most speakers will merely refer to it elliptically by saying, "As Mark Twain says about the weather," realizing that any audience anywhere in America—or in the world for that matter—will be able to repeat the saying to themselves and at the same time be grateful to the speaker for not spoon-feeding them. Just the other day General Hugh S. Johnson in one of his radio broadcasts quoted, or more accurately, misquoted, Twain about the weather.

In short, it might be counted as the humorist's most famous saying—if he had really said it.

Recently after many years of fruitless search I succeeded in tracking down the saying. Like millions of others I had always thought that it must be in Twain's famous speech on "New England Weather," first delivered at the dinner of the New England Society on December 22nd, 1876, and I would always refer everyone to that speech. When some one would come back to me and declare that he had read the speech over several times (In Twain's Collected Speeches,

edited by William Dean Howells) but had not been able to find it, I would airily answer and tell him to read the speech over more carefully and he would surely come upon it, because the quotation was certainly there. One fellow finally became so insistent that I told him somewhat petulantly:

"Bring me the speech and I bet you fifty dollars I can find it."

Never did I read over any speech so carefully in my whole life, but I lost my fifty dollars. It was not there; the nearest thing to it being:

"There is a sumptuous variety about New England weather that compels the stranger's admiration. In the Spring I have counted one hundred and sixty-six different kinds of weather inside of twenty-four hours."

Then I became determined to find the saying—or ruin my eyes in the attempt. Hour after hour, day after day, I spent in going through all the collected works of my kinsman and even all the fugitive articles never collected in any book that could be tracked down with the aid of long-suffering librarians. At long last I discovered that the saying was fathered not by Twain at all but by Charles Dudley Warner (1829-1900), a well known author of the 'seventies and 'eighties whose most widely read book bears the innocuous title, *My Summer in a Garden*. After practicing law in Chicago, Warner went East and secured an editorial position on the *Hartford Press and Courier*. Being neighbors he and Clemens became fast friends, and the two men collaborated on *The Gilded Age*, which appeared in 1873.

My father once asked Mark Twain would he recognize any of his characters if he met them on the street.

"Dr. Jim, I would recognize only one. Not Tom Sawyer or Huck Finn, as you might expect, but only Colonel Malberry Sellers, the character that first appears in *The Gilded Age*."

The famous line about the weather was written by Warner in one of his editorials in the *Press and Courier* for 1890. It is impossible to say just how this saying began to be attributed to Mark Twain. A year or so later, however, Twain published his *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, each chapter of which, the reader will recall, is headed by a Mark Twain maxim. Someone must have hastily concluded that the weather saying came from this book—especially as the saying bears all the earmarks of a true Twainian remark. For no one—least of all the kindly and gentle Charles Dudley Warner—could be a neighbor of the irresistible Mark Twain without having become subjugated to his influence, even in writing!

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

### WITH MARK TWAIN IN EUROPE

HE was an old and great admirer of Twain, Mussolini told me the afternoon of my audience in the Palazzo Venezia. And when I asked him what was his favorite work of the American, he answered:

"Altogether I have read about six of his books in English, and I think that my favorite is *Huck Finn*."

Il Duce was sitting at his large desk in the palatial ball-room that had been converted into his office. He wore a civilian suit with a winged collar and a dark tie. The only insignia of any kind was a Fascist button in the lapel of his coat—as every member of the party wears in Italy. What struck me most about the leader were his marvellous eyes, for they gave the person to whom he was talking perfect attention. His look seemed to fathom every corner of one's soul. Bold, indeed, he who would attempt lying to Mussolini!

For the space of ten or fifteen minutes that we talked, there was no sound or interruption of any kind. Usually the greater the person one is talking with, the more secretaries buzzing in and out every minute. But we could not have been freer from interruption if we had been conversing on a desert island.

When I arose to go, Mussolini also stood up and started with me towards the door.

"You would greatly honor our Society," I said, "if your Excellency would send us a photograph."

"I will do it now," he replied, and led me back half way across the tremendous room to his desk at the side of which

stood a chair containing several large photographs. He held them up in turn, asking:

"Which one do you like the best?" but naturally I waited for him to choose. Then he singled out one,

"Do you like this?"

It was a splendid photograph showing the great man standing with his hands folded, wearing the Fascist dress uniform. This he lay on his desk and taking up a piece of scrap-paper, wrote:

"To the Mark Twain Society and in memory of the visit of Cyril Clemens in Rome,

Mussolini, 3 November, 1930. IX."

He then asked me to look the writing over before he put it on the photograph. There were "i's" where the "y's" should have been. And he listened most patiently while I explained that for certain "i" sounds we employ a "y".

How different Mussolini's eagerness to learn from the snobbishness of Louis Fourteenth who commanded a rule of grammar changed that he might legitimize an error which he was in the habit of making. The things that impressed me most next to Mussolini's extraordinary eyes were his kindness, gentleness, and unaffectedness. Having spoken to Mussolini, I know what it must have been to have met Napoleon. In the course of our conversation I had mentioned Marconi, whom Mussolini referred to as "a very great man." A few days later I had the pleasure of calling at the Italian Academy for a talk with Marconi, a man of unusual charm who wore the mantle of his marvellous genius with Mussolini's modesty. It was my privilege to present him with the medal of our Mark Twain Society. Upon receiving it, he said he had obtained his first glimpse of America in reading, as a boy, about Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer.

On leaving Marconi the thought struck me that it was a shame that his fascinating life had not been written about

by a master such as Andre Maurois, who has made Marshal Lyautey live for the whole world in his recently published biography.

A few weeks later I called upon Maurois in Paris and after presenting my card I was shown into the Frenchman's study which faced a splendid garden with a high wall at its end. He was a man of medium height with black hair, a lively step, in the prime of his life—his eyes quick and scintillating and conveying the impression that they would not wear a puzzled look for long, even in the most difficult circumstances, but would quickly arrive at a decision. His smile was winning and attractive and lingered all too short a time upon his face. He spoke in excellent English with scarcely a trace of accent.

The study was a snug little room, three walls being covered with bookcases, all filled from the floor to the ceiling, and the fourth wall being taken up with the huge window that opened upon the garden.

After showing me to a chair Maurois swung his desk-chair around to face me, and said:

"Mark Twain was the author that first made me fond of the United States. I think he is the writer who best represents the American spirit to foreigners. My initial visit to your country confirmed every impression I had gained of the States, from my reading of the humorist's works. I cannot say that much for any other writer."

"Which of Twain's books do you find most popular in France?"

"I think it is his various collections of humorous short stories. One of the most popular has been a group that appeared under the title *Plus Fort que Sherlock Holmes*. We French are apt to lose ourselves in the longer works of the American."



"After reading your *Disraeli*, Mr. Maurois, I felt as though I had known him in real life. How did you happen to achieve such an effect?"

"I employed my theory that the smallest details about a man are often the most interesting. Everything that can give us an idea of what the man actually looked like, the tone of his voice, the style of his conversation, is essential. I feel that if a biographer is not capable of making us see a human being of flesh and blood behind the clouds of papers and speeches and action, he is lost. Therefore when *Disraeli* received the Honorary Doctorate at Oxford I mention the fact that he scanned the ladies' galleries with his monocle and discovering Mary Anne, threw up to her with his fingers an almost imperceptible kiss. Again, a little thing but what an indication of character, was *Disraeli's* note to O'Connell, 'I am one who will not be insulted even by a Yahoo!' and yet again his touch of subtle flattery when he wrote to Victoria, 'we authors'."

Maurois' theory about biography brings to mind what Bernard Shaw told me about Mark Twain's *Autobiography*,

"I was disappointed in Mark's *Autobiography*" he said "the more especially since he had followed the method that I had always suggested was right for such a book: no definite plan, but just to give your recollections as they came floating in upon the consciousness.

"And then he followed another one of my suggestions: that the early years of a man's life should be stressed. For I think that all biographies cease to be interesting once the subject has reached maturity. I cannot read a biography further than the childhood and early years. After that all biographies are the same and there is no use in reading them."

Shaw recalled that he had met Mark Twain:

"Late one morning he walked into our flat in Adelphi Terrace. Our parlor maid, though she did not know who he was, was so overcome by his personality that she admitted him unquestioned and unannounced, like the statue of the Commandant. Whether it was on that occasion, or a later one that he lunched with us, I cannot remember; but at any rate he did lunch with us, and told us stories of the old Mississippi storekeepers."

Mark told Shaw he had enjoyed *Cashel Byron's Profession*, that story of a pugilist which had first been called to his attention by Robert Louis Stevenson.

Shaw paid a fine tribute to the memory of Clemens:

"He had a complete gift of intimacy which enabled us to treat one another as if we had known one another all our lives, as indeed I had known him through his early books, which I had read and revelled in before I was twelve years old."

The famous dramatist told me that Lady Gregory kept a picture of Mark Twain in her study, and that Oscar Wilde got much of his fondness for exaggeration from the American. He furthermore recollected that William Morris always declared that *Huck Finn* was one of his favorites and that he was constantly quoting it.

*Huck Finn* was also the favorite of another great writer, the late John Galsworthy, who so told me the day I called upon him and his charming wife at their home in Hampstead. He was a man of medium height, iron-grey hair, and keen penetrating eyes. His countenance was modelled on noble lines . . . . expressing at one and the same time, shrewdness and benignity, with his firm, statue-like features, his grave immobility, his air of detachment and distinction, the calm deliberation of his voice and gesture.

Before leaving, I asked Galsworthy if he would mind

writing in my autograph book. And when I called for it the next day, imagine my delight to find the following:

"When all the world's gone wireless mad,  
And jazz has got what music had,  
And fooling's always bitter stuff,  
And no one can be smart enough;  
When humor's frivolling on screens,  
And wit is made in joke machines,  
All the joys of jesting go,  
And laughter leaves a world made so;  
Then, from such fate if we'd be free,  
And gain a sweet delivery,  
And know once more a laughing land:  
Let Mark Twain rise and wave his hand!

John Galsworthy,

September 2, 1930."

A day or two after this a letter reached my hotel from G. K. Chesterton, inviting me to tea. The directions read, "get off the train at the town of Beaconsfield and anyone can show you the way to our house." That I did, and a short walk took me to a charming cottage with a large sign at the gate, "Look out for the dog, he bites." I was welcomed at the door by the Chestertons, who took me into a study, which seemed to be drowned with books.

It was early August and we sat down before a massive fireplace whose sweating stones actually made the room cooler.

"What a comfortable chair this is!" I remarked.

"Yes, it is. That is Mr. Bernard Shaw's favorite chair," he replied.

"I have always admired the genius of Mark Twain," Chesterton told me, "which may truly be called gigantic. Mark Twain dealt so much with the gigantic exaggeration of imagination; the sky-scrapers of literature. He was the

greatest master of the tall story who has ever lived and was also, what is more important, a thoroughly sincere man."

Chesterton wrote in my autograph book:

"Greetings to the Mark Twain Society from an Innocent at Home,

G. K. Chesterton,  
known as the unjumping frog of Bucks County."

And Mrs. Chesterton added:

"Best wishes from the wife of the Innocent."

Few realize that the professor of Latin at Trinity College, Cambridge, was none other than the author of the world-famous *A Shropshire Lad*. The day after seeing Chesterton I went down to Cambridge; and had a talk with the author of those oft-quoted lines:

"Malt does more than Milton can

To justify God's way to man."

Housman said that he was exceedingly fond of *Huckleberry Finn* and that the "Ode to Stephen Dowling Botts" was one of the poems he knew by heart. The reader will recall how when Huck was befriended by the Grangerfords he heard about their late daughter Emmeline who had drawn a figure with several pairs of arms but had died before she could make up her mind which pair to leave and which to scratch out. Emmeline, however, is best remembered for her "Ode to Stephen Dowling Botts," who died not from whooping-cough, "nor measles drear with spots," nor "despised love," nor stomach trouble, but

"His soul did from this cold world fly

By falling down a well."

All Europe I found to be immensely fond of Mark Twain. Perhaps the greatest tribute was paid by a lady in Switzerland who said that at a party she once attended each

person could "wish" for anything he or she wanted. With all things whatsoever at her disposal, she simply wished she had never read the works of Mark Twain, so that she could have the joy of reading them again for the *first* time!

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

### THE MARK TWAIN MEDAL

SIR HENRY FIELDING DICKENS, the last surviving son of Charles Dickens, in his letter of acceptance well expressed the purpose of the International Mark Twain Society:

"I feel greatly honored by your offer to make me an Honorary Vice-President in the International Mark Twain Society. It is only right, I think, that the name of Dickens should be closely associated with a Society whose 'province is to knit the whole world in bonds of cultured peace.'

"Sympathy should rule the world. That was the substance of my father's teaching and I know that it is true."

The Mark Twain Medal was established by the Society in 1930 to show recognition for outstanding achievement in various fields of human endeavor. As an indication of the high regard in which the medal is held, the 1936 winner of the Pulitzer Poetry Prize, Robert P. Tristram Coffin, wrote recently:

"You spoke of the possibility of my being proposed for the honor which your Society confers annually. Of course, I should be no end delighted if such a distinction came to me. But I do not think I have as yet deserved such an honor."

The first recipient of the medal was Benito Mussolini. Bearing the inscription, "Mussolini, Great Educator," it was presented to him at the Palazzo Venezia on November the third, 1930, by the President of the Society. After saying that he was an "old and great admirer of Mark Twain," Mussolini paid the following formal tribute:

"I gladly associate myself to the tribute paid by the International Mark Twain Society to the great writer who, with his deep and human sense of humor and his witticism, brought cheer to several generations, not only in America, but all over the world.

"His genius is the synthesis of the sparkling and youthful characteristics of the people of the United States. Mark Twain has been and remains one of my preferred authors.

"To the intellectuals of America I send my cordial greeting as well as the greeting of all the Italians who follow with sympathy the dynamic Spiritual life of the Republic of the Stars and Stripes. Mussolini."

In 1931 the late Rudyard Kipling received the Medal, inscribed, "Rudyard Kipling, Prince of Authors," with a charming letter of acceptance written from his home in Burwash, Sussex, under date of May sixth:

"Dear Mr. Clemens:

"We only got back from Egypt last night to find the Medal and your more than kind note with it. The first thing I thought of was what *he* would have said: and the advice he would have given me on my manners and deportment when I wore it. Can't you *hear* him?

"It is a signal honor and a specially intimate one for me. I am not going to slop-over about it, but I want you to convey to the Society my deep sense of the honour and my great pleasure in it."

In recognition of his outstanding campaign speeches the Medal was offered Franklin D. Roosevelt, who accepted from Warm Springs, Georgia, on December 3rd, 1932:

"My dear Mr. Clemens:

"Thank you very much for your letter. I shall feel greatly honored to be presented with the Silver Medal of

your society. I feel especially honored because as a boy I had the great privilege of meeting Mark Twain.

Very sincerely yours,

Franklin D. Roosevelt."

On the eighth of December, 1933, the Medal, inscribed to "Roosevelt, Great Orator," was presented to the President at the White House. Mr. Roosevelt acknowledged that he owed more to Mark Twain than to any other writer, and sent the following message to his fellow members through their president:

"I shall always count myself fortunate in having met Mark Twain when I was a boy, and being a devotee of his books then as I am now."

"Once while I was visiting the British Museum," remarked the President, "I asked the Director to suggest a book that would give a vivid picture of the early English. 'It is a coincidence,' replied the Director, 'but the best book that I can recall is by a fellow-American of yours, one Mark Twain, and the book is the *Connecticut Yankee*.'"

"Did you know, Mr. President, that the slogan of your administration, the 'New Deal,' was first coined by Mark Twain in the *Connecticut Yankee*?"

"I am well aware of that, for it was there that I obtained the phrase."

George Santayana has been a member of the Society for years. His letter accepting membership is a classic:

"I know nothing about your Society, and little about Mark Twain, but that little good. Nevertheless an honor shared by Mussolini is not to be declined by me. May the consequences, if any, be made known to me."

The year when he was offered the Mark Twain Medal in recognition of his contribution to literature, he wrote from his retreat in Rome:



"My dear Clemens:

"I am overwhelmed by your praises of *The Last Puritan* and the offer of the Mark Twain Medal. Unfortunately, if the offer involves a journey to Saint Louis, my old age and other sad attributes will prevent me from receiving it. However, in any case, please accept my heartfelt thanks."

When it was suggested that the Medal be inscribed the "American Plato," Mr. Santayana wrote:

"Dear Clemens:

"Thank you and your committee for your congratulations for still being in this world. It is a dubious privilege in itself, especially at the age of seventy-three, but I am in good health and spirits, and willing to exist a little longer, *Deo volente*.

"As to my medal, and the inscription you propose, I suppose being from the Mark Twain Society, it is meant to be humorous. But most people would laugh at us, not with us; and please choose something else, or (better) nothing at all. I have an imitation-gold medal from the Royal Society of Literature which says simply *Honoris Causa*, and leaves the rest to the imagination. That at least is safe."

When the Medal was offered Alfred Noyes in recognition of his contribution to the field of biography, he answered from the Isle of Wight:

"Dear Mr. Clemens:

"I must thank you very much for your kind letter. It will, indeed, be a great pleasure and honor for me to accept the Mark Twain Silver Medal; and I shall always be extremely proud of the association.

"I am hoping very much that my book on Voltaire will have some interest for Americans. I have been working on it for seven years; and as you know there is a memorable connection between Franklin and Voltaire.

"Can you let me know if Mark Twain himself had any particular admiration for the latter?"

"With my very best wishes and cordial thanks once more.

Yours sincerely,  
Alfred Noyes."

When it was suggested that Mr. Noyes come to America to receive his Medal, he replied:

"Dear Mr. Clemens:

"Thank you very much for your letter and the enclosures, was greatly interested in them and to hear of your projected book on the poet\*. I wish I could promise to contribute to it, as you suggest: but at the moment I am writing against time on a book which I hope to get out in the Spring (following the Voltaire).

"I'm afraid, too, that I will not be able to come to America this or next year.

"Please remember me to my old friend, Witter Bynner, if you are writing to him. I have his books here, and have always admired his work greatly."

One of the most read poets of today, is William Butler Yeats. His first book, *The Wanderings of Oisín*, which appeared in 1889—just half a century ago—is still enjoyed by poetry lovers.

"Riverside, Willbrook  
Rathfarnham, Dublin.  
Nov. 11, 1936

"Dear Mr. Clemens:

"Please convey to your Society my gratitude for the award of their silver medal, of which I have been informed through Dr. Douglas Hyde.

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\* An Evening with A. H. Housman by Cyril Clemens.

"I knew Mark Twain slightly. Lady Gregory and I dined with him many years ago, and I remember vividly his talk and his stories, always admirable in matter and manner.

Again thanking you, I remain

Yours sincerely,

W. B. Yeats."

When it was suggested that the Medal be inscribed, "W. B. Yeats, the Modern Hesiod," Mr. Yeats answered under date of December 21st:

"Dear Mr. Clemens:

"I think the inscription well thought out. I thank you and your committee.

"I accept with gratitude the Honorary Membership left vacant by Lady Gregory's death.\* She was my very best friend, and was that for many years."

Another man to accept the Medal was Sir James M. Barrie. When asked if it would be convenient to have Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, the Society's English representative, call upon him to present the Medal he replied as follows:

Adelphi Terrace House,

Strand, W. C. 2

15 Jan. 1937

"Dear Mr. Clemens:

"Please excuse delay as I have been away. Any time Sir A. Quiller-Couch, who is one of my best friends, fixes will suit me, and I leave all announcements in your hands. Hail to *Barrie and His Contemporaries*. \*

Yours sincerely,

J. M. Barrie."

Robert Frost accepted by telegraph:

"Need I tell you how sensible I am of the honor. I have been ill or I should have made acknowledgment sooner.

---

\* By Carroll Sibley, which was sent to Barrie.

The only problem is when I could be in St. Louis for the ceremony. Shall we settle that later by letter. You piled one favor on another."

When asked for the approximate time most convenient for him to receive the Medal, Mr. Frost answered, under date of January 16th, 1937 from San Antonio, Texas,

"Dear Mr. Clemens:

"I keep burning your distinguished checks because I don't know why they were made out to me. Will you tell me what books of mine you lack in your library. I must see that you have them. Maybe you are merely trying to sap my rugged honesty. You know what rugged individualism is? Well this is the next thing to it. I like what you told me about the old negress\* in Bermuda and I liked your chapter on Housman in America. I'm no rewrite man. I see nothing I could suggest your changing.

"You see what vast state I am living in concealment. Please don't give me away. We must see if we can't meet when I am turning north in late March. Some time after March 20th."

For many years A. E. Housman had persistently declined all the academic honors offered him by various universities at home and abroad. The proposal from the University of Oxford to confer on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters he had twice refused, in 1928 and 1934. A few years ago he told his brother Laurence of another refusal which, till then, he had kept secret. His brother had for some time felt a concern that the one honor Housman perhaps would be willing to accept, the Order of Merit, had not been offered him. Since others were feeling the same way, one day Laurence asked if he would accept it. He declared he would not, and when, disappointed, Laurence de-

---

\* Ninety years old, who admired Frost's poetry.

manded the reason, he said that he had decided against accepting any honor, and against this particular one because it was not always given to the right persons.

With these preliminary remarks the reference in the letter written when the Medal was offered him will become clearer:

Trinity College, Cambridge,  
March 2, 1936.

"Dear Mr. Clemens:

My forefinger has a small fracture and is in plaster of paris, so please excuse my handwriting and my brevity.

"I am deeply sensible of the honour which your Society does me by the offer of its Silver Medal, and I shall always remember it with gratitude. Nevertheless I beg you to allow me to decline it, as, in pursuance of an early resolve, I have in the course of my life already declined a considerable number of honors, even when offered me by my own two Universities and by the King of England with the same excess of kindness and over-estimate of desert.

Yours sincerely and gratefully,  
A. E. Housman."

Another man who felt obliged to decline the Medal was Col. Charles A. Lindbergh. This letter discloses a side of the aviator that is not known to the general public:

Long Barn—Weald—Sevenoaks

October 8, 1936.

"Dear Mr. Clemens:

I must apologize for not replying to your letter long ago. I have been away from England most of the time this summer, and I am only now beginning to go through the mail which accumulated during my absence. I am extremely sorry to find that your letter has not been answered.

I want to express my appreciation of the honor which you suggest in your letter. It is a great source of satisfaction

to me to know that you feel that the work I have done in fields connected with medical research, is deserving of the Mark Twain Medal. However, I do not believe we are yet certain of what importance should be attached to my work. It will probably take several years before we have more than an indication of the results which it may be possible to obtain. I am particularly anxious to avoid attaching unjustified importance to my experiments, and I would like to let the results measure their value as years pass.

"I also feel that my work has been part of a joint research with Dr. Carrel. The apparatus I constructed would have been useless without his knowledge and skill in surgical technique. As a matter of fact, even the design and construction of the surgical problems which were involved, had necessitated the facilities which are available only in his laboratory in the Rockefeller Institute. I know of no other man who would have had the vision and patience necessary during the years of experimental work, in the construction of apparatus, which were required before actual biological experiments could be commenced.

"I hope you will understand this explanation, when I tell you that I do not feel justified in accepting at this time the honor which you suggest. To do so would, I believe, necessitate my placing a value upon my work which I think can be placed properly only after the passage of time. I hope I can make you realize how deeply I appreciate the contents of your letter.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Lindbergh."

In 1937 Kemal Ataturk was offered and accepted the Mark Twain Medal. The inscription that he approved was:

"Kemal Ataturk, the Modern Romulus",  
in recognition of his having established a new country in the

Turkish Republic, and a new city in his capital Ankara. President Ataturk wrote a most charming letter of thanks:

Ankara, January 19th, 1938.

"Dear President Clemens:

"Your courteous letter accompanying the Mark Twain Medal which you were kind enough as to transmit to me has profoundly touched me. This manifestation of sympathy coming from a Society which has such a high reputation in the United States of America and in the world at large is most valuable to me.

"Please receive my earnest thanks and kindly convey to the honorable members of your Society the expression of my deep gratitude.

Yours very sincerely,  
Kemal Ataturk."

Like his celebrated father before him, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes was a lifelong admirer of Mark Twain the man and his work. During one of his visits to the charming old home on F Street where the Justice lived surrounded by his books and beautiful furniture, (some of which had been in his ancestor's drawing room when the Boston Tea Party of 1773 was planned) the author offered the Justice the Mark Twain Medal on behalf of the Society in recognition of his outstanding achievements in the field of jurisprudence. Mr. Holmes most graciously accepted the Medal, which in due course was struck, engraved "Holmes Great Justice," and despatched:

Supreme Court of the United States  
Washington, D. C.

February 28, 1931

"My dear President Clemens:

The Medal arrived this morning and I think it quite charming. Of course I appreciate the honor, so I send you

double thanks. I shall keep the Medal *so long as I can keep anything on earth.*

Very sincerely,

O. W. Holmes."

The Mark Twain Medal for 1938 was awarded to John Masefield, the fifteenth poet laureate after John Dryden who was the first to receive the title; and was inscribed, "Masefield, English Pindar."

Pinbury Park, Cirencester, May 27th, 1938.

Dear Mr. Clemens:

By some strange accident, your letter of March the 20th, tumbled out of a pile of papers onto my writing table this morning, and was opened for the first time, some seven or eight weeks late. I have no notion of how it got to be where it was; but can only plead, that sometimes my mail is enormous and the pile of papers on my table more than I can deal with.

However, I am desolated to think that your very gracious and charming offer of the Mark Twain Medal should have lain unaccepted for so long. Even if be now too late, let me apologize for the delay and thank you for the great honor of the offer.

Few things would give me greater pleasure, than a recognition marked with the name of Mark Twain, whose writing has been a delight to me for *over fifty years.*

I never had the honor of meeting Mark Twain, but once many years ago, when walking in London with the late A. H. Bullen, who was supposed to be Mark Twain's double, I had the glory of hearing people say of my companion,

"There goes Mark Twain!"

It will probably now be too late for any Medal, nor do I deserve any, save one of wood, for mislaying a generous letter.

Yours sincerely, John Masefield.



# PRINCIPAL BOOKS OF MARK TWAIN WITH DATE OF PUBLICATION

(Published during Clemens' life)

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County and other Sketches, 1867

The Innocents Abroad, 1869

Roughing It, 1872

The Gilded Age, (written in Collaboration with C. D. Warner), 1874

Mark Twain's Sketches New and Old, 1875

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, 1876

A Tramp Abroad, 1880

The Prince and the Pauper, 1882

Life on the Mississippi, 1883

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, 1884

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, 1885

The American Claimant, 1892

The One Million Dollar Bank Note, 1893

The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins, 1894

Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, 1896

Tom Sawyer Abroad, Tom Sawyer Detective, and other Stories, 1896

Following the Equator (The English title is More Tramps Abroad), 1897

How to Tell a Story and Other Essays, 1897

The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg, 1900

The \$30,000 Bequest, 1906

Christian Science, 1907

Is Shakespeare Dead?, 1909

Extract from Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven, 1909

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